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An effort has been made in this second volume of a 3-volume publication to include items from the literature which can be useful in strengthening teacher aide pre- or in-service training programs. The material was prepared for Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel, but can be of general value in enriching the professional foundation of aides and staff working with them. Readings include: discussions of the purposes and objectives of aides; job descriptions for aides; lists of activities related to teacher aides; descriptions of programs; analysis of the special problems of slow learners, underachievers, and mentally retarded children; and programmed instruction. Related documents are RC 003 524 and RC 003 553. (SW)

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The Preparation of....

BIA TEACHER
and
DORMITORY AIDES

Prepared By
AVCO ECONOMIC SYSTEMS CORPORATION
Under The
Elementary and Secondary Education Act
For The
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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Volume II
April 1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INTRODUCTION

The literature on the subject of teacher aides and related subjects is extensive, thorough - and often repetitive in content.

An effort has been made here to include several items, selectively chosen, which can be useful in strengthening teacher aide pre- or in-service training programs.

Such supplementary readings may be read, discussed and evaluated by teacher aides whose backgrounds have prepared them, or the readings may be used by those who are orienting teacher aides, as an adjunct to the teacher's own understanding of the potential contributions of the aides.

In any event, availability of the readings to those concerned about the improvement of teaching and learning can be of value in enriching the professional foundation of both the aides and those working with them.

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"USE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS AS TEACHER AIDES AND TUTORS"

Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, Bantam Books, Inc., 1968, p. 451.

USE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS AS TEACHER AIDES AND TUTORS

"We have noted the educational gains accomplished through use of local, sub-professional personnel in the schools. These workers can contribute to improving community-school relations by providing a close link between the school system and the parents."

"AIDES FOR TEACHERS"

Staffing for Better Schools, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1967, pp. 13-27

AIDES FOR TEACHERS

THE TEACHER AIDE -- PART OF A TEACHING TEAM

In the past several years there has been an enormous growth in employment of non-professional aides to classroom teachers. In some places aides' duties are as simple as serving as monitors in the lunchroom; in other places, as important as grading papers or taking part in the instructional process. Many believe that in schools in disadvantaged areas aides can do much to bridge the gap between neighborhood and school, that they can give children the feeling that school is part of a familiar world; and that they impart to neighborhood mothers a more direct knowledge of what really goes on inside the schoolhouse.

But let's take the simplest and most direct purpose supposedly served by aides. Do they really free a teacher's time to teach? Or does supervising them make more trouble than it's worth? This has been a subject of emotional debate ever since aides were first admitted through the schoolhouse door.

One answer was produced a few years ago when Charles B. Park of Central Michigan College announced the results of a 5-year study in 25 Michigan public schools. In this extensive investigation, teachers' activities were actually measured by a stopwatch for long periods before and after aides joined the staff. In a 2-year period during which aides were employed, teachers had slashed the percentages of time they devoted to routine duties: Correcting papers was reduced by 89 percent; enforcing discipline, 36 percent; taking attendance, 76 percent; preparing reports, 25 percent; supervising children moving between classes, 61 percent; monitoring written lessons, 83 percent.

What did teachers do with all that new-found time? They increased time spent on lesson preparation by 105 percent; recitation, 57 percent; preparation of homework assignments, 20 percent; moving about the classroom, desk to desk for individual coaching, 27 percent.

As Professor Stanley L. Clement recently wrote: "We strive to improve the quality of preparation for the teaching profession, yet we ask teachers to perform duties far beneath their level of training . . . . We advocate higher teacher salaries, yet assign our able teachers to tasks that could be done by people with far less ability . . . . We seek to raise the professional status of teachers yet keep them performing duties hardly professional . . . . We strive for good teaching morale, yet we keep teachers dissatisfied by requiring that they perform duties which they dislike (but others might enjoy doing). We want teachers to be creative - to experiment, to improve - yet we keep them bored by clerical tasks . . . . It is only common sense to place people at the level of their best talent."

If almost all teachers wish they had smaller classes, is it valid to consider aides as a means of reducing a teacher-student ratio? Some years ago Dr. James B. Conant proposed that high school English teachers be assigned no more than 100 students in all their classes. A superintendent in a big Midwest city replied, "It would cost my city an additional $2 million a year. If I had the $2 million, I couldn't get the teachers. And if, by some miracle, I could get the teachers, I couldn't get the classrooms. What's the next best thing?"

At that time Dr. Paul B. Diederich was becoming nationally known for preaching that the "next best thing" was employment of college-educated housewives as lay readers of student papers. "Now after a 6-year experience with this program," Dr. Diederich recently wrote, "I am beginning to believe that it is a better thing: That the team solution is superior to the individual solution."

The paid aides become a regular part of a school staff. They generally are on duty from opening to closing of the school sometimes beyond closing. In employing them, a school makes commitments due any employee, sets aside an appropriate portion of its budget for salary and other benefits and promises a certain degree of job security. The school can require of a teacher aide what it requires from any employee, a high degree of responsibility to group discipline, punctuality, regular attendance, and sudden changes of responsibility in emergencies.

The following are examples of how aides have been used successfully in different grade levels and for various purposes.

HOME-VISITING AIDES

A Midwestern principal, a pioneer in the use of aides in his large industrial city, says that of all the valuable things an aide might do in stretching the arms of teachers, none compares with the service of a home-visiting aide.

His school is in a neighborhood densely packed with families on welfare. Mothers are so burdened with the problems of survival that they have little awareness of the support that their children need to make a success of school.

Almost every contact between school and home has been a disaster of communication. One day a second-grade girl appeared in school after 3 days of absence. She had no note from her mother, who was illiterate. The teacher asked the child if she had been sick. The child said no. The teacher scolded her and sent a sharp note home pointing out the consequences of a neglectful attitude toward schooling. The mother, who couldn't read the note, correctly assumed that the communication, like all others she had received from the school, was hostile. The truth was that the little girl's baby sister had fallen against the stove a few days earlier and died of severe burns.

"This kind of thing isn't likely to happen in our school any more," says the principal, "if the aide is doing her job and if the teacher has learned the proper way to work with the aides. The home-visiting aide is an intelligent woman from the neighborhood, probably a mother herself. She has an easy rapport with the poor because she's been poor. She probably has a high school diploma. But the main thing is that she has sympathy with the situation of both school and parent; she's not timid; and she knows her way around the neighborhood and the public agencies. At least, that's the ideal we look for.

"When a kid is identified as an absence problem, the teacher and aide don't set as their first goal dragging the kid back to class. Their first goal is to find out what his problem is. If his sister didn't fall against the stove, maybe the soles fell off his shoes. We have plenty of sources for getting new shoes if we can just find out which kid needs them."

He describes the school problem: "In school, we give eye examinations. When a child needs glasses, we inform the mother. A few days later, maybe he still has no glasses. We send a second note home to mother. Still no glasses. The problem is not that a family can't afford to buy eye glasses. If they're on welfare, the welfare department will supply them. If they're not on welfare but very poor, there are clinics and charity agencies to supply them. But the mother doesn't always know this. Sometimes she doesn't understand our note and she never gives it to the welfare worker.

"That's where the home-visiting aide comes in. If she knows the kid needs glasses and the mother didn't arrange for them, the first question the aide looks into is why. She brings the mother together with the welfare worker or the clinic or you-name-it, and first thing you know, the kid's wearing specs and he may have the first chance he has ever had to learn to read.

"Since we've had home-visiting aides, we can call parents' meetings for the first time and expect them to mean something. First of all, the aide can go around among parents and ask them to come to school, not for a bawling-out, but to find out what Johnny does there all day, maybe even to find out how well Johnny is doing. Not all the parents come, but the most lively ones do. So now we have a chain of communication to spread word, from one language to another, of what school is all about. The teacher can express himself to the aide in school lanuage. The aide, who is bilingual, can pass the word to parents in the language of the poverty stricken neighborhood and home. Even if a message only gets to the liveliest of parents at least it has penetrated into the neighborhood and will spread around from there. And don't think that the process doesn't happen in the other direction, too. As soon as the parents begin to understand through an aide what school is all about, the teachers are bound to start learning what life in the neighborhood is all about.

"What do we want to tell at parents' meetings? Simple things. Many of these parents never had the experience of homework. So they don't know that it is important to turn off a TV set when a kid tries to study. It may never have occurred to them that a family argument taking place when a kid has his book open may be the end of his studying. From there, we can move to more sophisticated things. If a family is large and its apartment is small, we can tell a mother how much she can help her child by bringing him to a library to do his homework. Nobody has ever told this mother that she can help her child, that she can really be an instrument for his school success. It's the greatest honor you can pay her.

"Of course, if you are going to do this, you have to make sure the librarian isn't going to throw the child out into the street because he is using schoolbooks instead of library books. This is another arrangement that teacher and aide, supported by their principal, can make with their neighborhood public library. Then, if you really want to get sophisticated, you can keep your school open afternoons and evenings, so that aides, paid or volunteer, can coordinate a corps of volunteer tutors to do homework with children.

"There is almost no end to the basic tasks a home-visiting aide can help a school accomplish - but which the school, when isolated, can't do by itself. The biggest thing the aide can do is so simple that some people are still shocked by its need. The aide can teach a mother, just through a friendly talk, that she would be doing the greatest thing in the world for her child by reading him a story at bedtime.

If there is no book around the house, let her read from the back of a cereal box. If the mother can't read, that's still all right. Let the child read to mother. After all, the purpose here isn't to have a formal exercise in remedial reading. The simple purpose is, first, to develop human contact between parent and child - a contact which this child has had too little of; and, second, to introduce into the kid's life the idea that the printed word can provide a warm way through which two human beings communicate. When a child finds out that reading and writing are really a way in which human beings can talk about interesting things with each other, your reading problems are going to crumble and your reading grade levels are going to soar.

"Teaching kids to read is more than a technique of pedagogy. Our teachers have the techniques and are ready to use them. They can really begin to use them now that they have home-visiting aides who can help create the simple out-of-school circumstances that will make it possible for a child to open his mind to learning.

"There is one more thing we've learned about home-visiting aides. The aide is usually a neighbor whom the child may have seen ever since he was old enough to play on the sidewalk. If he hasn't known her personally, the child senses that she is just like the neighbors he has known. Now for the first time a child sees 'one of our kind' around the schoolhouse, talking to principal, talking to teacher, acting as a school official. After school, the child sees the aide out in the neighborhood, climbing the steps of tenements, talking to parents, greeting children in the street, this time in the role of a sympathetic neighbor. Just seeing her face provides a link between school and home, making each a little less alien to the other, making one a little more part of the other. I don't know how a teacher can accomplish this, and certainly not a principal. But I do know that teachers and principals are strengthened in doing their professional jobs when this intangible link between school and home has somehow been established."

TRAINING OF CHILD-CARE AIDES

In the last 2 years Project Head Start has stimulated a national interest in preschool training and created a need for thousands of adults with at least a minimum of training in the care and mental stimulation of young children. Until recently nursery school offered few opportunities for employment; they were mainly a luxury of the upper middle class.

Now that preschool education has become an urgent national concern, fully qualified professionals cannot be trained fast enough to keep up with the need. Therefore, there is little doubt that subprofessional aides, working under the direction of professionals, have an essential part to play in the preschool classroom. There is hardly any standard practice to date, unfortunately, on the training of aides. Furthermore, the staffing of preschool classes is often blocked by antiquated laws requiring specific refinements of training.

School systems frustrated by this problem today might profit by the odd experience a junior college had a few years ago when it set out to accomplish a more limited purpose. It is a useful case study in avoiding complication, sidestepping annoying formalities, and getting the job done.

A psychology professor went to the executive dean of the city's junior college system and proposed a 2-year program to train nursery school therapists for emotionally disturbed children. These aides would help not only in handling materials, keeping records, and ushering children about but also in leading them in games and simple activities. Better still, they would perhaps become friends with the children and draw them out, following the instructions of, say, a psychiatric social worker or psychologist.

The dean liked the idea. But his staff of faculty psychologists and social workers balked. They were scared by use of the word "therapists."

"The people on my side," recalls the professor, "decided to shop for different names. Each name suggested cooled the fears of some but raised objections from others. Finally we though of 'child-care aide,' which didn't scare anybody. That was great progress and it only took 2 years. But, in the meantime, the executive dean had decided to drop the courses. Nothing happened until a year or so later when he got a better job elsewhere.

"As soon as a new executive dean arrived, I gave him a plan for a course for child-care aides. He liked it and recommended that we immediately apply somewhere for a grant. When we had previously decided to train nurses in our junior college system, we needed a grant. It took a year and a half to prepare a proposal. We got the grant and then spent another year and a half dealing with various nursing associations to arrange the standards and training. Now, after 4 years, we were training only 40 nurses. So this time I decided to try a different way.

"I went to all of the eight junior colleges, spoke to the deans in charge, and told them that their executive dean had approved this project and that we would start implementing it. Three of the eight were interested, but we found nobody on their staffs qualified to organize or give courses for child-care aides. In all the colleges the person who seemed most interested was an English teacher, but a few psychologists and art and music teachers also wanted to go along. I told them that the State Department of Child Welfare had some excellent people who might help and that the nursery school experts could be brought in to talk about basic curriculum.

"An expert came down to inform us of the legal requirements we would have to meet in setting up a nursery school laboratory - what size of room and playground, how many toilets, how doors must swing, etc. After she had walked through our college and found no room suitable, she told us of a nursery school close at hand that would be suitable as our training center.

"We sent a letter to every nursery school in the city inviting them to meetings to discuss what ought to be in our training program. Many came. We divided people into small groups and asked them to list problems they had observed in nursery schools and things they would like to learn if they were to take our course. The problems they came up with were simple and real: How do you deal with a temper tantrum in a 3-year-old? How do you stop children from fighting? How do you teach art? How do you deal with belligerent parents? How can you introduce some formal education into a nursery school when the law says that a nursery is not an educational institution because nursery teachers are not certified teachers?

"With these questions in mind, we outlined a 10-week course. Then we took practical steps, like asking an outstanding art teacher to teach a class on teaching art to children. She asked, 'Should I give a lecture?' We said, "No, we want each student in the class to act as if he were a 4-year-old, and you to act as if you were their nursery teacher.' The class had two lessons in making group murals by pressing clay or potatoes into paint, then stamping their shapes on the mural."

One of the experts engaged to teach in the first course, a holder of a doctoral degree in child development, soon became administrator of the program to train child-care aides. It is now one of the largest specialized programs in a community college anywhere.

LAY READERS

An Ohio city employs 24 aides for high school English teachers at $1.50 per hour for an annual cost of about $7,500. Generally, one aide divides her time between two teachers. She checks compositions for errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, and word usage. She may indicate need for improved organization, diction, transition, and similar techniques of better writing. In some cases, she recommends a grade for the content of a paper. If papers are to be revised based on a teacher's review and comments, the aides may check the revision for compliance with the teacher's suggestions. Occasionally, the aides also grade objective tests, vocabulary papers, and routine written drills.

Aides must have a college degree with, preferably, a major in English. They are given a standardized test for language proficiency. In an oral interview, the main qualities sought are a lively interest in writing and an understanding of ways of developing pupils' skill in and appreciation of good writing.

RECRUITING AND TRAINING AIDES

A Maryland county recruited and trained 42 aides for 25 elementary schools in a poverty district. When the county superintendent opened his recruitment campaign by releasing announcements to the local newspaper and radio station, he was overwhelmed with applications.

Each applicant was interviewed by a principal and the district director of personnel. The 42 aides were chosen for their demonstrated interest in children and previous experience with juvenile groups - Boy and Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, or experience as a parent.

The University of Maryland joined local school officials in conducting a 9-day in-service training program for the aides. Through this program the aides learned something of the organization and policies of the school district and the broad purposes of elementary education.

In addition, they attended classes - conducted by master teachers - which dealt with techniques of teaching spelling and reading, the art of storytelling, the enjoyment of poetry, a review of arithmetic and the use of an elementary school library. Experts gave them instruction in running projectors and other devices, making transparencies, keeping records of loaned equipment, and cutting stencils.

The instruction focused on handwriting. Why handwriting? In grades one and two, children spell out their words with printed letters; in grade three, they shift to cursive writing - a shift which troubles many children. By helping them individually, a trained aide can ease the transition.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE LABORATORY AIDES

A school in Maryland found that a foreign language laboratory is an especially good place for an aide to relieve a teacher from a sizable amount of nonteaching duty.

Besides assisting the instructor in recording audio materials, the aide keeps an inventory of materials and equipment and periodically checks and cleans the rollers and recording heads of tape recorders. Between visits of students, the aide checks machines for proper volume and sound quality, for condition of wires, and for loose screws in knobs, microphones, and headsets. She makes sure that master recordings are filed in proper sequence. She also sets up and operates projection equipment and phonographs.

The aide should have a background of training in one or more foreign languages in order to assist individuals in small groups in conversations and drill.

TYPICAL DUTIES OF AIDES

The following list of effective uses of aides for routine tasks is compiled from experiences of many schools. Many duties in this composite list will not be applicable to all-grade levels.

1. Taking attendance and keeping routine records.
2. Collecting funds for various purposes and keeping accounts.
3. Correcting objective tests and making up lists and charts for the teacher showing pupil performance.
4. Supervising playground activities.
5. Supervising the lunchroom.
6. Helping children in the primary grades with their clothes.
7. Supervising children in the elementary grades during lavatory periods.
8. Checking out library books.
9. Caring for and operating audio-visual equipment.
10. Supervising the distribution of milk.
11. Typing and duplicating, answering the telephone, and running errands to the office.

12. Filing work in children's folders.

13. Mending books.

14. Making arrangements for field trips.

15. Assisting children in construction of bulletin boards, displays and projects.

16. Escorting children to the nurse.

17. Supervising quiet activities and rest period.

18. Listening to and sharing thoughts with children who need to talk to an adult.

Some school districts have had remarkable success in assigning to aides more complex tasks than those listed above. In an elementary school in the Southwest, for example, aides work directly with students in a wide variety of situations: reading stories aloud; listening to children explain their homework, their plans for a new project, or their interests in a favorite subject; helping children find books and reference materials.

Occasionally, an aide may be particularly gifted in a subject or an art. For example, a part-time aide was able to provide piano accompaniments that would otherwise have been unavailable. A retired leatherworker was put in charge of a program in leathercrafts.

Some states restrict use of noncertified persons in the classroom. Administrators in many states, however, are relaxing their interpretation of old regulations or pressing for the adoption of new ones. In doing so, they are acknowledging the successful use of auxiliary staff under the supervision of professional faculty members.

Meanwhile, professional organizations are beginning to review old definitions of the role of teacher. A question asked is: Must a teacher continue to be the sole direct instrument of instruction, or is there a valid new role for the teacher as the manager of an instructional system that makes use of other people as well as materials? In the schools of tomorrow, may the phrase "teacher and his staff" become as common as today's term, "teacher and his students?"

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS -- AN ABLE AND WILLING RESOURCE

A new source of help similar to the teaching aide program has recently become available to the teacher - the volunteer program. This new program enables a school to call upon the wide variety of specialized abilities and talents which are available in every community and which many citizens are eager to contribute to schools and children.

Because the volunteer is not paid, he is not usually required to accept the obligations and discipline that are required of aides or teachers. He is seldom on the job everyday; 2 or 3 half-days a week is the usual schedule. The irregular schedule and the kinds of service he gives prevent his developing the same close working relationship with a teacher or an administrator as a paid aide develops.

The two kinds of programs, aides and volunteers, are by no means contradictory. In many schools one is a valuable supplement to the other. The following are examples of effective uses of school volunteers.

A VERSATILE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A West Coast city, having a major university as well as a large community of the poor, has developed an outstanding program of volunteer work in the schools. More than 300 volunteers - 200 university students and more than 100 mothers - contribute more than 20,000 hours a school year by working 2 or more half-days a week.

Because of the high educational level of the volunteers, many are especially qualified to help in direct instruction in science, math, English, foreign languages, communicative arts, reading, storytelling, and special programs for the mentally retarded, aphasic, and blind.

In addition to providing this direct help to the classroom teacher, the volunteer program has launched a variety of special projects so useful that other schools may wish to duplicate them. By combining them into a comprehensive program, a school could change its entire temper.

A Homework Center

Every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:30, about 40 pupils who want help in homework gather in a school cafeteria where they join more than a dozen volunteer tutors specially qualified in math, English, social studies, and foreign languages.

The volunteer in charge of the center is a retired teacher, and many of the tutors are university students, young enough to establish an informal rapport with students. The ratio of tutors to pupils is low enough and the organization flexible enough to enable a pupil with a special problem to get an adult's undivided attention, perhaps for the first time in his life. For example, one seventh-grade boy had recently arrived with his family from Hong Kong. His language difference, added to a personal shyness, at first kept him away from the homework center. When he did come, he was taken over by a university student also of oriental birth who, guided by his own memories as a newly arrived student, could help the boy overcome his feelings of strangeness with a new language in a new land. (The same university student on other afternoons is volunteer adviser of a ham radio club at another school.)

A Paperback Bookstore

In one school volunteers borrowed space from the cafeteria and funds from the PTA to start a store of low-cost paperback books. Pupils act as clerks; a volunteer supervises and maintains inventory. From the outset, inventory has been more of a problem than anyone anticipated - on the store's opening day almost the entire stock was sold out. Within a year volunteers in two other schools had started bookstores.

Noontime Concert Series

An industrious and music-minded volunteer in a junior high school is responsible for launching a weekly concert that lasts through three lunch periods. The volunteer in charge started the series with a 40-piece baroque orchestra from a city high school, then followed it with what seemed an endless supply of vocal and instrumental talent from all parts of the community. Student audiences numbered 250 to 300 per concert. Volunteers are also providing piano accompaniment for classroom singing and special musical programs.

Afterschool Clubs

Volunteers took the initiative in forming extracurricular clubs at an elementary school: Clubs for math, science, and drama, and two art groups. Though they started in a school where deprivation was a characteristic of the pupils, an ingenious volunteer got the idea of conducting meetings alternately at this school and at an elementary school in an affluent neighborhood. Pupils of both schools were invited to join and get to know one another through their club interests. The plan has been so successful that parents from the affluent neighborhood have formed a volunteer program of their own.

Systemwide Services

Besides services to individual schools, involving direct contact with teachers and children, the volunteer program provides services for the whole school system. They include:

Community resources -- Speakers, exhibits, and other resources for special presentations are provided upon request of a teacher or principal. In one week, for example, a geologist, an airline navigator, a speaker on Mexico, a physicist, and a cellist were brought into elementary school classes to give talks and demonstrations.

Field trip guide -- A booklet containing information about 50 tours that classes might take in the surrounding region is periodically updated. For example, under the category "Industry, Business, and Farming," tours include bakeries; coffee, sugar, and salt companies; a dairy farm; and a petshop. The "Transportation and Communication" section lists tours of newspapers, a shipping line, a seaport, and an airport. Each listing sets forth the times when visits can be made, the total time needed, the maximum number of children that can be accommodated, the grade levels for which the trip is suitable, and other pertinent information.

Clipping service -- Articles and pictures are gathered and filed for use by teachers and other staff members.

Central library service -- Assistance is given with the processing of books in the central library.

Typing and mimeographing -- Curriculum materials, class newspapers, staff notices, and form letters are typed or mimeographed.

Special services -- Short-term manpower of special needs is supplied.

All the groups of volunteers - those in each school as well as those providing citywide services - are self-operating under the direction of a volunteer coordinator. The coordinators are led by a director, having full professional status on the superintendent's staff. He and his secretary are paid by a grant of less than $15,000 from a local foundation. Important functions of the director are to ensure that volunteer work is of value to the schools and to minimize new administrative demands upon the superintendent and school principals.

VOLUNTEERS FOR A READING PROGRAM

In an Eastern city hundreds of volunteers are engaged in an individual reading program, a project hardly possible if it had to depend upon the use of paid professional staff.

Applicants for the service are carefully screened; each one is interviewed and his references studied. Those selected are required to attend an orientation program and afterward to meet with the program director for a second interview. They serve a minimum of 3 hours a day, 2 days a week. In addition they attend in-service lectures and take part in discussions led by specialists in reading.

A volunteer meets with a child for 45 minutes twice a week in a room set aside for the program. During the sessions he tries to cultivate a relaxed personal relationship with the child based on the child's own interests. Sometimes the volunteer reads stories to him, and sometimes they read aloud together. They talk about the stories and other things that might open new horizons for the child.

When the child indicates interest in subject material, the volunteer tries to find simple books on the subject that the child may take home. He exercises the child in drill material furnished by his regular classroom teacher. He also keeps a journal of his observations of each child, which becomes a source of information for the teacher as well as a record of progress for the volunteer.

CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH

In the same city volunteers have organized an unusual group to help children from non-English-speaking families learn to converse in English. This is an essential preparation for their learning to read and write in English.

The techniques used by the volunteers are oral and visual; they deal in no way with the written word. In games based on physical exercise, for example, a volunteer will walk and run and then identify each activity with the words "walk" and "run." The child has no difficulty assigning the newly learned word to the familiar activity. By pointing a finger, the volunteer demonstrates the meaning of a simple sentence - "I walk; you walk." Through pictures, he conveys familiar nouns: house, bread, man, car, pencil, apple. Through the idea of color charts the child rapidly learns the English names of colors which he already knows in his parent's tongue. After a few sessions many children find the grouping of words a fascinating and rewarding game: "red car," "yellow house", "man runs," "my pencil," "pencil writes." Their progress from single words to phrases to complex, spontaneous conversation is astonishingly rapid.

Usually, volunteers work with two children at a time, meeting them twice a week for 40 minutes a period. On alternate days the children meet with another volunteer. This helps them get accustomed to different speech patterns. The pairs of children are carefully matched - and sometimes re-paired - according to their language level and personality. Sometimes, when it seems advantageous, a volunteer meets with a single child.

Volunteers chosen for this program are expected to have patience and warmth. They are screened for good enunciation without marked regional or foreign accent. They need no previous language training, not even a working knowledge of a foreign language.

Before beginning work, the volunteers take a training course of four 2-hour sessions and spend several hours observing trained volunteers at work. Their training continues on the job through the guidance of an experienced volunteer chairman, who keeps a close watch on the work of new volunteers. Daily conferences with teachers provide an opportunity to review methods, regroup children, and discuss new teaching tools.

Children are screened for the program almost as carefully as volunteers. The goal is a working familiarity with English words and sentences. A child is not admitted if his only problem is a foreign accent. He is considered in need of the program if he speaks no English or speaks English haltingly or in stereotyped phrases.

VOLUNTEER TEENAGERS FOR LIBRARIES

A city on the shore of the Great Lakes has found special advantage in recruiting college students and teenagers for volunteer work in libraries. Its aim is not only to lighten the load of librarians but also to help make libraries more useful and inviting to disadvantaged students.

The large number of extra manhours provided by volunteers enables school libraries to add daytime programs and to stay open during the evening. For little children, teenagers conduct storytelling and storyreading sessions. To many of these children, a library previously represented an alien place where a severe authority - a librarian instead of a teacher - presided, sometimes appearing more interested in enforcing regulations than in spreading the joy of stories. With the informal teenagers present, children find the friendly atmosphere of stories and books far preferable to a home atmosphere of crying babies, cooking odors, insufficient light, and a blaring television set.

Older children in junior high and high school have also found an inviting atmosphere in a library manned by visiting teenagers. These older students appear at ease in getting individual help in practical problems: how to decide what books to read, how to expand a bibliography by proper use of a card index, how to find books on library shelves, and how to use standard reference volumes.

VOLUNTEERS AS ROLE MODELS

There is a growing feeling among educators and psychologists that the high percentage of broken homes among the poor often leaves children of poverty with little understanding of what adults do in the world of work and in a normal home environment. How is a child to know that he is expected to work for a living some day, and that schooling leads to employment skills, if he has never had the simple experience of seeing a man get up in the morning to go to a job or of having an adult in his family bring home a weekly paycheck? Many experts believe that the absence of self-supporting males in the lives of these children is one of the critical ingredients of their deprivation. Whether the sex distinction is the critical factor or not, the child has little contact with self-supporting adults. His observation is confined to mothers, enslaved by too many domestic chores, and to socially disoriented males, hanging around on the sidewalks.

To combat this special form of deprivation, volunteers have been helpful in a variety of imaginative ways. Sometimes their best use is not to teach but just to be, merely presenting themselves before children to play with them, talk with them, enjoy them, and be enjoyed by them. The hope is that their outlook and behavior will rub off on the rapidly forming attitudes of growing children. In one city a preschool project made a special effort to enlist volunteer fathers to work with certified teachers in class play, storytelling, and conversation. In another city adult men, especially Negroes in predominantly Negro neighborhoods, were recruited as volunteer counselors, tutors, and companions for children in elementary and high school grades. Some were highly educated as lawyers, doctors, and social workers; others were in the medium range of occupational achievement - postal clerks, store employees, service technicians, and the like. The important thing was that they were "making it." Children could hardly fail to absorb at least a trace of their attitudes of discipline and aspiration.

A most effective and direct use of adult role models was made by a Midwestern city with a large and especially oppressive Negro ghetto. An assistant superintendent in charge of this district organized a road show of 17 young Negroes, each trained in a skilled job, but not so advanced that a 12-year-old slum child could not imagine doing the same. The road show traveled from school-to-school, appearing before parents and pupils. A young principal of the district describes the meetings:

"We tell the parents, 'Now we've been saying that if your child works hard in school it will pay off in the long run. We're going to try to show you.' The audience is skeptical. Whatever you say, they'll shake their heads for an hour and say 'Yessir, that's right,' the way they've learned to do when white people talk to them, but you're not communicating. Then we bring in each of these 17 people, start interviewing them before the crowd, and a change takes place.

"'Where do you work?'

"'So-and-So Aircraft.'

"'They make space capsules.'

"The young fellow illustrates on a blackboard what space capsules are and how he helps design them. We ask if he needs any training for such work. He tells about the schooling he had. Then we ask: 'Did you get that kind of job the first time you went somewhere to apply for one?' You can hear the hall freeze with attention. He says, 'No. But I knew I was properly trained and qualified. I knew there was a place for me somewhere and I found it at So-and-So Aircraft.'

"Most of the adults in that hall have never heard a young Negro from their own neighborhood say anything like that before - because for the most part it was never true before. Next we bring on a computer programmer who not only has a good job but recently won an award as the outstanding government employee in this area.

"The one who really shakes the people up is a woman who's an advertising artist for a milk company. We ask her, 'How many children were in your family?' She says, 'Nine.' You feel a slight tremble in the hall from an excuse caving in. Then she adds that she was the oldest and had to look after all the others. Another excuse hits the ground. She says, 'I remember I had two dresses. While I wore one, I washed and dried the other one for school next day.' You can't imagine the impact on the people when she tells that. That's the story of every woman in the hall."

SENIOR CITIZENS -- A SPECIAL VOLUNTEER RESOURCE

In an extraordinarily successful volunteer program involving almost 1,500 lay persons in a Midwestern industrial city, it has been discovered that elderly people who are young of mind, particularly among the retired, have a special contribution to make. Retired people often miss practicing their work skills as much as children are frustrated by the lack of them. Thus a purpose for each is served by bringing together those who have left the world of work and those who have not yet entered it.

The kind of work hardly matters; in fact, the wider the variety, the better. In this city, retired machinists visit school metalshops to talk with boys about metalworking and to demonstrate tricks of the trade. Students are as enlivened by close contact with an oldtime practitioner as the oldtimer was by contact with the eagerness of youth.

An 82-year old expert on forestry took elementary classes on tours through the city's parks, and along the way conducted a running lecture-discussion about trees.

A retired labor arbitrator visited high schools and participated in role playing with students to illustrate how collective bargaining works and how people in a dispute, no matter how heated, can always find some acceptable ground for agreement.

"A TIME FOR LOOKING AHEAD IN EDUCATION"

A Time for Teaching, Willard Abraham, Harper and Row,
New York, 1964, pp. 123-125.

A TIME FOR LOOKING AHEAD IN EDUCATION

...One innovation of team teaching is the practice of using teacher aides. Ask any teacher whether there are some activities she would just as soon pass on to a competent assistant - or wait until you are teaching yourself. The answer is almost invariably an enthusiastic, "Yes!" Since 1956 nearly 500 volunteers annually have worked in the New York City public schools through an organization called the Public Education Association. Their activities vary from organizing a school library to vocabulary building to piano accompaniment to assistance in crafts to teaching English as a second language. High school teachers in the greater Boston area have had volunteer aides from the undergraduate honor rolls at Harvard, Radcliffe, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology; a similar program evolved from Columbia and Barnard College, to Manhattan's benefit. The most quoted demonstration of the use of teacher aides is Bay City, Michigan, where their work extends to many of the more routine activities of the classroom teacher; taking attendence, preparing simple reports, correcting papers, answering the telephone, and taking messages. Because involvements like these occupy at least one-fourth of a teacher's time, you can easily see how valuable this assistance can be and how the teacher can be freed to do more of what he was hired to do, teach children. The practice is economical because the aides are paid less than teachers (as in Bay City) or are volunteers.

Some people, however, don't want the help, resent the presence of someone else, or prefer to bear the entire burden. But just as doctors and dentists depend on the assistance they receive from others in their offices, so teachers will increasingly profit from this kind of division of responsibility. College English teachers can have helpers who can be depended upon to read student themes competently; high school teachers can have part-time secretarial help; elementary teachers can have more time to meet individual problems. The teacher aide can fit into many current "teaching" functions. The fact that we ask our teachers to be and do all things (for parents as well as for children) is evidence that we are not very clear about the teacher's professional role. And our lack of clarity often results in waste of talents on nonprofessional tasks.

"Too many teachers are caught in any unhappy cycle," observed two astute critics of the education scene. "Although they enter the profession filled with idealism they gradually lose their enthusiasm and curiosity in a treadmill of academic trivia. We take a first-rate master teacher and make a second-rate clerk out of her.*

A call for help is being heard more and more in various parts of the country, although it is still relatively faint, and in many positions for which you'll be considered, the assistance will already be there by the time you arrive...

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*How to Get the Best Education for Your Child, New York, Benjamin Fine and Lillian Fine, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959, p. 227.

"SHOULD TEACHER AIDES BE MORE THAN CLERKS?"

Phi Delta Kappan, Thorwald Esbensen, January 1966, p. 237

SHOULD TEACHER AIDES BE MORE THAN CLERKS?

By Thorwald Esbensen*

Here in Duluth the opportunity to employ teacher aides under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 has encouraged us to ask ourselves this question: Should teacher aides be more than clerical aides? That is, should a properly trained teacher aide be able to perform limited instructional tasks under the general supervision of the classroom teacher? Our answer to this question is yes.

A September, 1965, statement from the State Department of Education concerning the employment of teacher aides in Minnesota public schools had this to say:

> "The primary purpose of teacher aides is to increase the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom. If a plan is to be set up for the use of these aides, it is important to determine the nature of the duties to be performed. Are (aides) to do purely clerical and housekeeping tasks, or will they devote part of their time to assisting with the teaching function? If the former, noncertificated personnel can be employed. If the latter, the aide becomes a teacher. State statutes require that teachers must be certified. The matter of primary concern here is not certification itself but the fact that certification implies preparation for teaching. Persons who perform professional, or even semiprofessional, duties must be properly prepared for them. While certification does not guarantee a successful teacher, it does attest to the completion of a program of preparation."

The prospect of having noncertificated personnel encroach upon the prerogatives of the regular teaching staff is certainly cause for legitimate concern. However, before we decide that any work which consists of "assisting with the teaching function" is automatically taboo for teacher aides, we ought to examine what it is that teacher education programs uniquely qualify our regular teachers to do.

In theory, at least, schools of education turn out teachers who are able to arrange the formal learning environment in such a way that the goals of instruction are met. The essential point is that the competent teacher must be capable of making certain kinds of decisions. The range and level of this decision making are what define the effective role of the classroom teacher.

Let's be more specific. A well-prepared teacher should be able to determine whether a certain instructional item may be usefully presented to a given student. The teacher does not necessarily have to create this item. The instructional material itself is normally available in commercially prepared form: books, films, records,`tapes, filmstrips, and the like.

There is a common tendency to confuse teaching with producing and presenting. A particularly depressing example of this occurs in instructional television, which all too often consists of taped lectures with the camera obediently fixed on the speaker's mouth as it opens and closes on selected morsels of human wisdom. Thus we foster pseudo-innovation. The height of creativity consists in finding yet another way to chain some new marvel of communication to the presence of an educational broadcaster. We limit new media to what is essentially the traditional lecture decked out in mechanical finery.

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As long as teaching is equated with specific overt activity, we shall spend a lot of time trying to decide which physical acts in themselves constitute teaching and which do not. The likely upshot of this will be the formulation of lists of approved and disapproved tasks for which teacher aides can be used. It would be difficult to suggest a more barren approach to the job of instruction.

Can we suppose, for example, that only the regular teacher should present any given body of information to a group of students? If so, what happens to the long-standing practice of using community resource persons to enrich the instructional program? Indeed, what happens to films, books, and other prime means of presenting information to students?

Can we reasonably maintain that the regular teacher is the only person qualified to 1) hear a child read the Dolch list of the ninety-five most common nouns, 2) read to children, 3) help students locate materials, and 4) repeat directions concerning assignments?

Hardly. A competent teacher aide could do all of these things - each task clearly having the effect of "assisting with the teaching function."

We must conclude, I think, that the distinguishing characteristic of the qualified teacher is his ability to analyze the instructional needs of his students, and to prescribe the elements of formal schooling that will best meet those needs. In this view, it is altogether proper for the teacher aide to be more than a clerical aide. The usefulness of the teacher aide should be restricted only by his own personal limitations in whatever duties may be assigned to him by the regular classroom teacher.

"TEACHER AIDES: HOW THEY CAN BE OF REAL HELP"

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TEACHER AIDES: HOW THEY CAN BE OF REAL HELP

By Wayne L. Herman

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One of the problems that increasing numbers of teachers and principals have to face when funds become available for teacher aides is: "Now that we have the aides, what are we going to do with them?"

This isn't as humorous as it may seem. The fact is, there is very little advice available on just how teacher aides can be worked into an efficient and productive classroom routine. I know because I have been asked the question many times and have attempted to find sources of helpful information without much luck. As a result, I have done considerable research on my own and have come up with a list of possible duties that may be useful to those blessed with an aide for the first time.

Because every school system has its own policy regarding the functions of aides, and because personnel qualifications vary widely, the following list is intended only to offer suggestions. No one school will employ aides in all of the capacities mentioned, but all of them are functions that have been tried and found successful at one school or another around the country. For convenience in separating basic duties, the list is divided into two parts - one for routine jobs requiring no instructional skills, and one for more advanced duties involving some instructional responsibility.

Non-instructional Functions

1. Collecting lunch and milk money.
2. Collecting supplementary books and materials for instruction.
3. Collecting and displaying pictures, objects, realia, and models.
4. Collecting money for charity drives, pupil pictures, trips, etc.
5. Correcting standardized and informal tests and preparing pupil profiles and scattergrams.
6. Correcting homework and workbooks; noting and reporting weak areas.
7. Proofreading class newspaper.
8. Ordering and returning films, filmstrips, and other audio-visual materials.
9. Telephoning parents about routine matters.
10. Filing correspondence and other reports in children's records.
11. Distributing books and supplies to children.

12. Distributing and collecting specific materials for lessons, such as writing paper, art paper, and supplies.

13. Procuring, setting up, operating, and returning instructional equipment.

14. Requisitioning supplies.

15. Building up resource collections.

16. Sending for free and inexpensive materials.

17. Obtaining special materials for science or other projects.

18. Completing necessary records and bringing other information up to date for cumulative records.

19. Keeping attendance records.

20. Entering evaluative marks in the teacher's marking book.

21. Averaging academic marks and preparing report cards.

22. Completing school and county reports.

23. Keeping records of books children have read.

24. Supervising the playground, cafeteria, and loading and unloading of buses.

25. Supervising the classroom when the teacher has to leave it.

26. Arranging and supervising indoor games on rainy days.

27. Preparing and supervising work areas, such as mixing paints, putting drop-cloths down, arranging materials for accessibility, etc.

28. Supervising clean-up time.

29. Organizing and supervising the intramural athletic program.

30. Accounting for and inventorying non-consumable classroom stock: books, textbooks, dictionaries, reference books, athletic gear, etc.

31. Checking out books in central library and other supervisory duties.

32. Managing room libraries.

33. Supervising seatwork.

34. Typing teacher correspondence to parents.

35. Typing and duplicating mass communications.

36. Typing, duplicating, and collating instructional materials.

37. Typing and duplicating the class newspaper.

38. Typing and duplicating children's writings and other work.

39. Typing and duplicating scripts for plays and skits.

40. Making arrangements for field trips, collecting parental permission forms, etc.

41. Keeping and maintaining a folder of representative work for each pupil.

42. Telephoning and making arrangements for special classroom resource speakers.

43. Displaying pupil's work.

44. Attending to housekeeping chores.

45. Helping with children's clothing.

46. Setting up and maintaining controls on seating arrangements.

47. Routine weighing, measuring, and eye testing (by chart).

48. Administering first aid and taking care of sick and hurt children, telephoning parents to pick up a sick or hurt child, taking home a child who does not have a telephone.

49. Taking an injured child to a doctor or hospital.

50. Telephoning parents of absent children.

51. Telephoning parents to verify notes requesting that children leave school early.

Semi-instructional Functions

1. Conferring with other teachers and the principal about specific children.

2. Interviewing children with specific problems.

3. Observing child behavior and writing reports.

4. Preparing informal tests and other evaluative instruments.

5. Preparing instructional materials: cutouts, master copies, flannel board materials, science materials, social studies displays, concrete teaching aids for arithmetic, etc.

6. Arranging bulletin board displays for teaching purposes, such as flow charts.

7. Arranging interesting and inviting corners for learning: science or recreational reading areas, investigative areas.

8. Keeping bulletin boards current.

9. Preparing introductions to audio-visual materials that give children background for viewing them.

10. Developing techniques and materials to meet individual differences, such as rewriting reading materials down for less-able readers, developing study guides, taping reading assignments for less-able readers.

11. Supervising club meetings.

12. Supervising seatwork calling for some judgment.

13. Supervising committees engaged in painting murals, constructing, researching, or experimenting.

14. Teaching a part of the class about a simple understanding, skill, or appreciation.

15. Teaching a small and temporary instructional group, such as on the use of the comma or overcoming slang.

16. Tutoring individual children: the bright or the less able.

17. Reviewing, summarizing, or evaluating learnings.

18. Teaching children who missed instruction because they were out of the room for remedial reading or speech therapy; repeating assignments.

19. Helping pupils who were absent to get caught up with the rest of the class in content, skills, appreciations.

20. Assisting children with their compositions and other writings: spelling, punctuation, and grammar assistance.

21. Listening to oral reading by children.

22. Instructing children on the proper use and safety of tools.

23. Settling pupil disputes and fights.

24. Teaching good manners.

25. Contributing one's talents in art, dramatics, music, crafts, etc.

26. Reading and storytelling.

27. Helping with the preparations of auditorium plays and programs.

28. Previewing films and other audio-visual materials.

NEW PARTNERS IN THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

A STUDY OF AUXILIARY PERSONNEL IN EDUCATION

BANK STREET COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
FOR THE
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
NOVEMBER 1967

NEW PARTNERS IN THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

(A Study of Auxiliary Personnel in Education)

THE NEED • • •

Have you ever heard pupils say:

> I don't dig school. Man, they tell you how to talk, how to act, how to eat even. Then at home, they tell you just the opposite. Why don't they either get together on all that stuff or leave me alone. I want out.

Have you ever heard teachers ask:

> How can I teach when I have to collect money, prepare bulletin board displays, check supplies, find missing books, prepare flash cards, supervise lunch hours, check attendance, and do all the other little things that eat up my time?

> What can I do for a child who needs a little extra help at a crucial time for him, when all the other children need me at the same time?

Have you ever heard parents say:

> School? Well, I don't know what goes on there but I do know that my children can't read. I can't get them to feel school is important the way they should.

Have you ever heard school administrators ask:

> How can I meet the increasing demands – and the very real need – for additional services, when I can't even find enough teachers and other professionals to do the job?

AN ANSWER - NOT THE ONLY ANSWER

The rapidly changing social scene raises many complex and urgent questions, and demands many answers from the school

One answer, and a good one, is the use of auxiliary personnel, such as teacher-aides, teacher-assistants, family workers, counselor-aides. These school employees have had little prior academic training when they start work. They learn from experience. They may study and grow on the job. Many have incomes at or below the poverty level. Often they are parents of children in the school they serve, but they do not work with their own children. They vary in age, racial and nationality background, and in the degree of skill, but they have one trait in common: the ability to work well with children and youth.

Auxiliaries who have had training help the learning-teaching process in two ways: first by relieving the teacher of many time-consuming duties and thus freeing him to teach; and second, by working directly with the children under the teacher's supervision, helping them to study, to play, to inquire, to think, to talk, in short - to learn.

RESULTS OF A NATIONWIDE STUDY

Fifteen demonstration training programs for auxiliary school personnel were studied by Bank Street College of Education for the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1966-67.

Trainees included: residents in target areas (predominantly Negro) of the cities of Berkeley, Detroit, Gary (Indiana), East St. Louis (Illinois), New York City, and Washington, D.C.; Navaho Indians in Arizona; rural poor in Appalachia, Maine, Mississippi; migrant workers in Florida; Puerto Ricans in San Juan and New York City; Mexican-Americans and others in Southern California; and a cross-class, cross-cultural group in Boston.

Some major findings are:

1) When carefully selected, continuously trained, and appropriately placed, low-income auxiliaries with minimum prior schooling seemed capable of assisting directly in the learning-teaching process with benefit to: pupils, teachers, administrators, home-school relations, and to the auxiliaries themselves as workers and persons.

2) Training -- preferably team training of teachers and auxiliaries who would be or were working together - was seen as the essential to the effective use of auxiliaries.

3) Job definition was obviously necessary to set limits, but in the most successful programs such specifications were applied flexibly, to meet the needs of each learning situation.

4) Career development (assurance of stable employment, opportunity for advancement, and training at each step in the job sequence) was found to be least in evidence, although most crucial, in school systems throughout the country.

STUDY FINDINGS - EDUCATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED

Some Special Needs of Disadvantaged Children	How Auxiliaries May Help to Meet These Needs
1. Education which is geared to the need of each child is important for all pupils but crucial for the disadvantaged.	1. Both teachers and auxiliaries may develop a different quality of relationship which is more pertinent to the child's needs when there are several concerned adults in the classroom instead of one.
2. Free movement and varied activities are particularly helpful for children with a high anxiety level who consequently exhibit restlessness and short attention span.	2. More small groupings and a wider range of activities are feasible in an aided classroom than in a situation where one person is working all alone, often in an overcrowded classroom and with an overloaded schedule.
3. Communication between middle-class teachers and lower-class pupils is frequently difficult because of language and cultural barriers, lack of common experiences, and frequent inability of the disadvantaged to express their real feelings appropriately and constructively.	3. The auxiliary who lives in the child's own neighborhood often communicates with the child in a way that is neither threatening nor strange. He may help the child adjust to the unfamiliar world of the school and also interpret some aspects of his behavior to the teacher.
4. Insecurity about his adequacy for coping with life is a block to learning for any child. It is a frequent problem for those who have been subjected to indignities and inequalities in all phases of living, from early childhood on through adulthood.	4. The low-income auxiliary who has faced up to and overcome some of the difficulties and frustrations the child now faces, says to the child by his very presence in the school: "It can be done. You, too, can succeed here."
5. A parent who has, himself, failed in a school setting, sometimes tends to be hostile to the school and ridicule education. Home-school conflict then becomes one of the destructive influences in the child's learning.	5. Involvement of parents from the neighborhood in the classroom may help them support their children's learning. The parent who understands the school's goals may be the best interpreter of the school to the community. Further, parents-as - auxiliaries and teachers may alter each others' ideas and behavior and thus reduce the gulf between life styles of home and school.

POSSIBLE STAGES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF AUXILIARIES

1) AIDE SUCH AS:	**Illustrative Functions**	**Training Suggested**
General School Aide	Clerical, monitorial, custodial duties	Brief orientation period (2 or 3 weeks) in human development, social relations, and the school's goals and procedures, as well as some basic skill training. no specified preschooling required.
Lunchroom Aide	Serving and preparation of food, monitorial duties	
Teacher Aide	Helping teacher in classroom, as needed	
Family Worker or Aide	Appointments, escorting, and related duties	
Counselor Aide	Clerical, receptionist, and related duties	
Library Aide	Helping with cataloging and distribution of books	
2) ASSISTANT SUCH AS:	**Illustrative Functions**	**Training Suggested**
Teacher Assistant	More relationship to instructional process	High school diploma or equivalent; one year's in-service training or one year in college with practicum both can be on a work-study basis while working as an aide
Family Assistant	Home visits and organizing parent meetings	
Counselor Assistant	More work with records, listening to children sent from class to counselor's office because they are disrupting class	
Library Assistant	More work with pupils in selecting books and reading to them	
3) ASSOCIATE SUCH AS:	**Illustrative Functions**	**Training Suggested**
Teacher Associate	More responsibility with less supervision by the professional	A.A. degree from two-year college or two-year special program in a four-year college. both can be on work-study basis while working as an assistant
Home-School Associate		
Counselor Associate		
Library Associate		
Social Work Associate		
4) TEACHER - INTERN SUCH AS:	**Illustrative Functions**	**Training Suggested**
Student Teacher	Duties very similar to those of associate but with more involvement in diagnosis and planning	B.A. or B.S. degree and enrollment in a college of teacher education or other institution which offers a program leading to certification
Student Home-School Coordinator		
Student Counselor		
5) TEACHER		

NOTE: An auxiliary can enter at any stage in the career ladder, depending upon his previous training and experience. He can cease training at the level at which he feels most comfortable. Upward mobility should be possible but not compulsory. The auxiliary's work should be treated with respect at each stage, so that he will have a sense of dignity and accomplishment, however far he may rise. Group and individual counseling should be available throughout both pre-service and in-service training.

TYPES OF WORK AUXILIARIES CAN DO IN SCHOOLS WITH PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

1. Examples of activities which directly support the learning-teaching process

The following activities were seen as particularly helpful in one project of the nationwide study which stressed listening, relating, supporting, inspiring, and serving as "trouble shooter":

a) Taking charge of a small group which is working on a special project while the teacher works with another group

b) Listening to a pupil tell a story

c) Giving a pupil a chance to show he can do something well

d) Encouraging pupils to help each other

e) Interesting a restless pupil in some of the available activities

f) Helping pupils learn how to settle arguments without fighting

g) Talking quietly to a pupil who is upset

h) Helping a pupil look up information in a book

i) Helping pupils improve special skills (such as gym, sewing, or dancing)

These are merely illustrative of the wide range of activities that are possible and sometimes desirable, always depending on the particular needs of the pupils, the ability of the auxiliary, and the leadership skills of the teacher. Persons from a disadvantaged area are sometimes slow in reading books but seldom slow in reading people. They pick up cues of trouble or of promise with alacrity.

2. Examples of activities which help the teacher by relieving him of noninstructional duties

The following activities were seen as particularly helpful in several of the demonstration projects, where the dual role of the auxiliary was stressed - that is, (1) helping the teacher, and (2) relating directly to the pupils. The task-oriented activities deemed most helpful were:

a) Preparing audio-visual materials such as charts, at request of the teacher

b) Keeping health, attendance records

c) Checking supplies

d) Filing and cataloging materials

f) Operating equipment such as movie projector, slide projector, tape recorder

g) Taking charge of pupils on various occasions, such as during lunch period, in hallways, on bus

h) Checking playground equipment for safety

i) Getting the classroom ready for the next day

j) Running a duplicating machine

Some of these activities are regular assignments for which the auxiliary plans and takes initiative. Others are assigned at a given moment as the need arises. All are duties which may be delegated outright to the auxiliary, rather than duties which are supportive of instruction and carried out under the teacher's supervision. Most of them involve some contact with pupils, however, which the auxiliary may capitalize upon for pupil learning if he is sensitive to the opportunity.

3. Examples of activities which provide a link with home and community

The following activities are usually performed with the supervision of the school counselor or social worker. These activities were seen by the Study team as particularly helpful in the schools where auxiliaries were used in this manner:

a) Visiting parents of children who are new to the school to welcome them to the school community

b) Reporting to the counselor problems observed in home visits so that appropriate action may be taken

c) Taking children to their homes when they become sick in school

d) Talking with parents of children who have been absent or to such children and their parents together

e) Working individually with a child who is too upset to remain in his own classroom and who is consequently sent to the counselor's office

f) Helping to plan and organize parent meetings

g) Talking with parents to find out how they feel about the school and reporting their reactions to a counselor

h) Helping parents understand how children learn and grow, and relating this to the children's homework

i) Helping recruit and register pupils in the preschool program

j) Answering the calls of parents and giving them information and referring them to the proper source.

Of all the auxiliaries employed in a school, relatively few are usually assigned to the guidance department. For example, of the 24 auxiliaries working in each school in the Berkeley demonstration project, only four were counselor-assistants. They were selected from auxiliaries already working in the school who had shown most sensitivity to children's needs and had demonstrated their skills in working with pupils and communicating with parents.

The Study team observed that a cadre of counselor-assistants permitted the guidance counselor increased mobility. It guaranteed that there would be a concerned and knowledgeable adult in the office at all times, to talk with a child who had been sent to the guidance office, to receive visitors, and answer the telephone. Since there was always at least one person in the office, the counselor could be reached in moments of crisis, even though the other three counselor-assistants might be in the field, performing such functions as making home contacts, working with pupils in the "cooling off room," or escorting children to clinics.

Some auxiliaries have special skills which are valuable for use in the classroom or the school at large. For example, auxiliaries who speak another language as well as English often are asked to serve as interpreters for parents who do not feel comfortable talking in English.

Perhaps the most important skill of all is the ability to listen and understand what the child is trying to say. "No one ever listened to me before," one auxiliary in Puerto Rico said of her experiences in an assistant training program. This woman, understanding the need to be listened to, went into the classroom determined to listen to what children were really saying, and to work with their concerns.

An ultimate goal of education may be expressed as helping children learn how to cope effectively with life situations. Auxiliaries have demonstrated their skills in helping children become self-directed. One auxiliary in Berkeley, California, recounted an experience in her school:

"One day I went to a child as I had been doing every day for several weeks to give him help in reading certain words. The child gave me a beautiful smile - one I'll never forget - and said proudly, "I don't need you any more.' He was on his own. He knew I would be there if he needed me, but he now felt sure enough to work by himself."

The auxiliary, having identified with the goals of the school, saw this episode, not as a rejection of herself, but as a tremendous personal achievement.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS

It is recommended:

- That when a school system decides to utilize auxiliary personnel, the program be incorporated as an integral, permanent part of the system.
- That goals be thought through carefully, stated clearly, and implemented by means of definite procedures.
- That there be cooperative planning by school systems, local institutions of higher learning, and neighborhood representatives, both before and after the program has been instituted.
- That job definitions set a floor and a ceiling on the auxiliaries' activities; but that within these limits the auxiliaries' role be flexible, accommodating to situational and individual requirements.
- That career development be fostered in terms of job descriptions, salaries, increments, and fringe benefits, moving from primarily routine functions at the entry level to more functions which are relatively responsible and directly related to the learning-teaching process with appropriate training available at each stage on a work-study basis.
- That professional standards be preserved and that all tasks performed by nonprofessionals be supervised by a professional.
- That recruitment and selection tap the wealth of previously undiscovered talent, particularly among males and underachievers, who appear to be capable of development in the specific role to be filled.
- That there be orientation of both the administrators and professionals with whom the auxiliaries will be working, including an opportunity for the expression of resistance where it may exist, and for resolution of conflicts, leading, hopefully, to acceptance of the new leadership role of the professionals.
- That whenever possible, professionals be asked to volunteer, rather than having auxiliary personnel assigned to them without option.
- That there be preservice training of auxiliaries to develop communication skills, other concrete skills, and basic understandings needed for success during their first work experience in a school situation.
- That professionals and nonprofessionals who will be working together on the job receive preservice training on a team basis and intensified in-service training also as teams with competent supervision.
- The in-service institutes be developed for the team training or administrators, other professionals, and auxiliaries, on a school-wide basis.

- That encouragement of those who desire to train and qualify for advancement be expressed in such a way that others who prefer to remain at the entry or any other level feel no lack of job satisfaction, status, or recognition.

- That hiring precede training, so that trainees will be given orientation for an actual job, rather than for a job which, in the end, may not exist.

- That feedback from trainees be encouraged and that their comments be received with openness and serious consideration.

- That both group and individual counseling be available as an integral part of training.

- That the use of auxiliaries be explored at various levels, secondary as well as elementary and preschool.

- That time be scheduled during the school day or after school hours with extra compensation for teachers and auxiliaries and other professional-nonprofessional teams to review their team experience and plan together for the coming day.

- That an advisory committee of school administrators, supervisors, teachers, auxiliaries, parents, community leaders, and university consultants be established to evaluate and improve the utilization of auxiliaries in each school where such a program is undertaken.

THE TASK AHEAD

The values derived from the utilization of auxiliary personnel in the 15 demonstration programs did not accrue automatically from the introduction of more adults into the classroom. Many complex but not insoluble problems arose as school people moved into new roles and relationships. This section deals with some of the more urgent problems that may be faced and coping strategies that may be employed as effective interaction is developed among professionals, auxiliaries, pupils, and parents in a community-centered school.

Reaching the Unreached

In most of the demonstration programs studied there was a tendency to do a certain amount of "creaming" - that is, selecting persons who, though poor, were most similar in values, appearance, and behavior to middle-class professionals. This was understandable in view of the importance of demonstrating that people below the poverty level and with little prior schooling can, in fact, make a valuable contribution to the learning-teaching process.

It appears that the time has now come to recruit and select those with potential which is less obvious though very real. This practice does not mean that anyone should be selected to work in a school simply because he is poor. There is no magic in poverty which automatically makes its victims able to reach out to others in a way which helps children learn and teachers teach. However, experience has shown that it is possible to "screen in" low achievers who have been "screened out" even of poverty programs - and with dramatic results in terms of combatting the sense of frustration, resentment, and loss of identity that may lead to violence.

Action Needed:

1. Recruitment patterns to reach those most victimized by poverty and discrimination, particularly men.

2. Selection criteria and procedures which attempt to ascertain the ability of candidates to work well with children.

3. Brief preservice programs which serve a double purpose: (a) to train, and (b) to explore and develop potential strengths before assignment of specific duties.

4. Vocational counseling to help place in other appropriate jobs those who do not qualify for work in schools.

Developing a Team Approach

Traditionally, many teachers have had an image of themselves as standing before pupils giving out information with the classroom door locked - figuratively and sometimes even literally. When a child did not respond to the information, as presented, he was usually written off as a failure. Seldom was there any question as to what was being taught or how it was being taught as possible causal factors for the child's inability to learn.

Today, a searching self-evaluation has been initiated by many teachers, administrators, and other professionals such as specialists in curriculum, mental health, and physical health. The aim is to discover how to reach every child. The introduction of auxiliary personnel into the schools has strengthened such self-analysis, since professionals find they have to clarify their own goals and practices for themselves before they can interpret them to their helpers.

A new leadership role is emerging for teachers as they learn to coordinate the contributions of other adults in the classroom, very much as an orchestra combines strings, brass, and woodwinds into harmony. The "teacher-leader" analyzes the learning and emotional needs of children. He utilizes all available resources - professional and nonprofessional, human and material - in a unified program designed to meet those needs. The teacher is the pivotal person, responsible and accountable for seeing that learning takes place in the classroom.

However, many teachers see this new role as a dilution rather than an enhancement of teaching. For one thing, they fear that they might lose personal contact with children, even though the help they receive in performing routine tasks may actually increase rather than lessen their opportunity for interaction with individual children.

Other professionals, such as counselors and social workers, also tend to resent any intrusion onto their particular turf. Many professionals look at their own small part of the child, without ever sharing their views and values as part of a team.

In essence, the team approach means that members of a working team do not ask: "How come I always wind up doing this kind of job?" or "How can untrained people do any part of my job?" but rather, "Which of us can learn how to perform this particular task in a way which will best help the pupil?"

Action Needed:

1. Team training of administrators, teachers, other professionals, and non-professionals, so that the needs of children become more important than the needs of the adults for personal achievement and recognition.

2. Application of the team approach simultaneously to the school as a whole and to each class situation - in fact the development of "teams within a team," so to speak.

3. Emphasis upon and preparation for this new and expanded role of teachers in institutions of higher learning which prepare teachers for certification.

Involving the Community

As parents and community leaders begin to make new demands upon the schools and seek a new role in decision-making, delicate negotiations are required. Two essentials of successful negotiation are a balance of power and a willingness to "give" a bit on both sides. Too often, in the past, parents have negotiated from weakness of several kinds - lack of status, lack of "know-how," lack of communication skills. And all too frequently, in the past, both sides have taken inflexible positions.

One sensitive and extremely complex problem has been discovered as low-income parents assume new responsibilities in the school, i.e., the effect of this shift in role upon their relationship with their neighbors. Sometimes, those who take on leadership roles are rejected by their peers as having "sold out" to the Establishment. Sometimes, the reverse is true; the new leaders adopt middle-class values and reject their own people.

Action Needed:

1. Involvement of selected parents as auxiliaries in schools situated in both advantaged and disadvantaged areas, with emphasis upon educational goals in training.

2. Establishment of school-community advisory boards composed of persons with various viewpoints in both school and community, working together toward analyzing realistically the situation and toward maximizing the contribution each group can make toward quality education.

3. Case by case analysis of each situation with counseling to support and guide the adjustment.

Facing the Administrative Challenge

Administrators are not only chiefly responsible for establishing overall goals and policies, setting the tone, and identifying what functions need to be performed by whom; they are also responsible for implementing these decisions through fiscal operations and organizational procedures.

In the fiscal realm uncertainty as to continued federal funding is a major problem. This uncertainty inhibits career development with its concomitants of job sequence including graduated compensation, increments, and fringe benefits as well as work-study programs with remuneration for study and educational credit for work experience.

There are also many procedural matters to consider such as (1) matching the "right" kind of auxiliary with the "right" kind of teacher within an appropriate situation; (2) allowing teachers to volunteer to use auxiliaries, or at least to self-select them; (3) providing the opportunity to change partners with the minimum of sensitivity when the principal problem appears to be a clash of personality; and (4) scheduling time within the school day for the teacher-auxiliary teams to review their experiences in the classroom and plan together for the next day.

The role of the administrator as interpreter to board, parents, and staff may seem burdensome to one who is not, himself, convinced of the ultimate values of auxiliaries to the school, and who lacks assistance both within and outside the school in coping with the complexities of the challenge.

Action Needed:

1. Assurance of continued funding by government, as is unquestioned for roads and maritime industry.

2. Priority in school budget "hard funds" for the employment and training of auxiliary personnel.

3. Close cooperation and joint planning by schools and local institutions of higher learning to develop work-study programs.

4. Orientation of adminstrators through institutes and workshops involving professional associations, unions, and community agencies at some point in the discussion.

5. Additional personnel in each school to provide for administration and supervision of special projects, made possible by federal funding, such as projects for the use of auxiliary personnel.

6. A plan for career development in each school system, along the lines of the model on pp. 8-9.

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*Research reported herein conducted pursuant to a contract with the OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

AUXILIARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

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John Lindlof, Director
Tel. 207-866-7297

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*Arrangements to visit the Demonstration Centers can be made directly or through the CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION SERVICE, A Study of Auxiliary Personnel in Education, 103 E. 125th Street, New York, N.Y. 10035.

CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION SERVICE

offers assistance to school systems, institutions of higher learning, community action agencies, and to groups and individuals interested in developing programs for the training and utilization of auxiliary personnel.

Specific services offered:

- distribution of materials based on analysis of demonstration projects
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For assistance and information
Tel. 212-831-1200
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"JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL AIDES"

Portland Public Schools, Portland, Oregon

JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL AIDES

High School Library Assistants

Library assistants perform all of the clerical duties in connection with the operation of high school libraries and, under supervision of the librarian, assist students in obtaining instructional materials.

Elementary Library Resource Center Aides

The elementary library aides are under the supervision of a certified teacher in each building. These aides are in charge of ordering and distributing textbooks, audio-visual materials, and printed materials. They oversee students studying in the elementary libraries and perform all of the clerical tasks incident to the operation of the libraries.

High School Book Clerks

Book clerks in the high schools, under the supervision of the vice-principal or librarian, order and distribute the text and supplementary materials for the high schools. They issue books to students, direct student assistants, and in some cases assist students in the library.

High School Store Clerks

The high school store clerks are in charge of the ordering and sale of school supplies and special materials in the high school stores. They direct the activities of student assistants and are in constant contact with students coming to the store to purchase materials.

Teacher Aides

The work which aides perform shall be that which is as nearly as possible non-instructional in nature, and of the following types and kinds as examples:

- Record grades
- Transcribe records
- Correct tests and written work which does not require subjective evaluation or where, under direction of the teacher, attention is given to correction of technical errors only
- Duplicate or mimeograph materials, set up demonstrations, prepare audio-visual equipment for use, write on the board, prepare bulletin boards
- Collect money such as for drives, milk, lunch, etc.
- Check, record, and report pupil attendance
- Supervise study halls in the secondary school that are set up for independent study. This does not apply to study halls established for supervised study.
- Supervise pupils on the playground, in the lunchroom, and during intermissions under the direction of certified personnel

- Perform room housekeeping duties
- Play the piano for physical education, music, and rhythms

Limitations on the Use of Teacher Aides

Aides shall not be used as substitute teachers, to relieve teacher overload, or to replace teachers on leave.

SCHOOL SERVICES PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY

In cooperation with Lewis and Clark College, which received a grant from the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Administration on Aging, the Portland School System has arranged to accept sixty elderly people as school aides. The tasks to be performed by these people under the supervision of certified personnel include:

1. to provide assistance in the cafeteria to small children
2. to provide assistance to teachers on the playground by watching recreation groups, preventing accidents and encouraging participation
3. to assist in hallways and lavatories with traffic problems and the problems of small children
4. to escort primary children between their rooms and cafeteria, playgrounds, auditorium.

WORK EXPERIENCE AIDES UNDER THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT

In cooperation with Portland State College, which has a grant under the Economic Opportunity Act, the Portland School System has arranged to accept twelve college students. Each is assigned to a school principal to work with a certified teacher in some of the following tasks:

1. to assist with the physical education program, taking care of equipment, preparing the ground for games, supervising in the shower
2. to assist in the school office with clerical and typing duties
3. to assist in the library
4. to assist in supervision of neighborhood children on the grounds and in libraries in after-school programs.

"ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' AIDES"

Training and Roles of Auxiliary Personnel for Early Childhood Education Programs

Garland Junior College, Boston, Massachusetts

ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' AIDES

Training and Roles of Auxiliary Personnel For Early Childhood Education Programs

Heretofore the role of the teachers' aide in the preschool and the kindergarten has been defined mainly as that of, "a helper with the routine duties". The role of the aide has been limited to functions involving duties, such as serving snacks, dressing children, setting up (or taking down) cots, hanging artwork, putting away toys, and collecting milk money. It is our concept that with intensive pre-service training the aide can strengthen the total program.

The role of the trained assistant teacher (with a two-year degree) in the preschool and the kindergarten setting has been perceived as one which encompasses many of the duties outlined above, with added responsibilities, such as assisting during music, storytelling time, and games; as well as setting up cirriculum materials and long-range program planning, and participating in discussions with the staff concerning the children's development, with knowledgeable insight into behavior.

Although physical preparation and "keeping the house in order" are very important in the Early Childhood Education program, we believe that the trained assistant and the trained aide can often interchange roles and functions. And, together, or individually, can relieve the teacher of some of her present functions so that the teacher can, in turn, give more attention and time to developing specialized skills and creative planning for the entire group.

The teacher should be the innovator. For example, the ways or methods she uses to translate an interesting story into a dramatic play situation (for five year olds) can involve the children in "acting out" words, so that they begin to get a feeling for language. A skillful teacher can help a child with undeveloped language skills by listening to him, reading with him, or making a tape recording and playing it back, so that the child can hear himself and begin to recognize his difficulties. It is equally important for the teacher to have time to speak to the mother of a disturbed child, when the child arrives in the morning, as well as during scheduled conferences. The teacher, familiar with the attention span of each child, should have time to find suitable materials for both the child with gross motor coordination, as well as the child with finely coordinated dexterity.

It is our philosophy that the assistant and the aide, trained with the appropriate skills and the sensitivity toward human relationships, and given some understanding of group dynamics can actively participate in the teaching-learning situation. The assistant and the aide can supplement the teacher's role to the degree whereby the teacher can emerge as the real leader of the group and use her leadership skills to the fullest extent to which her personality and professional training will allow. Thus, the teacher becomes the catalyst to stimulate the minds and hearts of her children and the staff with whom she works. The teacher must be given ample freedom and perspective to develop and operate in this role.

Any training program for assistant teachers or aides, in order to be effective, should have a closely coordinated sequence of student teaching, classwork, seminars for feedback and discussion, and individual counseling.

We also recommend the use of trained assistants and aides in the primary grades, with a similar orientation, but with the addition of a deeper understanding of children in their middle years, and some basic study of the content areas of reading, social sciences, and language skills.

With this in mind we offer the following selection criteria, qualities, training, and description of duties and responsibilities for the preschool and kindergarten trained assistant and trained aide.

ASSISTANT TEACHER

Selection

- Initial screening through recommendation by two or three faculty members who know student.
- Interviewed by Chairman of Child Study Department prospective student is asked: 1) reasons for wanting to major in Child Study, 2) review of previous academic record, 3) previous experience with children, and 4) self-evaluation - patience, emotional stability, self-esteem, etc.

Qualities

- Vitality and stamina
- Warmth in personal relationships, toward both adults and children, and ability to work with them
- Patience and sensitivity
- Interest in community problems
- Concern for and respect of children and their needs
- Motivation and intellectual curiosity
- Objectivity and ability to take criticism
- Self-confidence

AIDE

Selection

- Recruited through high schools and colleges, social and welfare agencies, community action programs, and mass communications media.
- Personal in-depth interview with Director of Program.
- Candidates screened as to: 1) interest in working with young children, 2) desire to work in diversified settings, 3) personal and academic recommendations concerning candidate's qualifications for working with young children - emotional stability (see "Qualities"), and 4) academic ability to successfully participate in program.

Qualities

- Dedicated to working with children
- Recognizes the importance of Early Childhood Education
- Warmth, sense of humor, flexibility, empathy, self-understanding, leadership, sense of responsibility and a feeling of self-esteem
- Understanding and sensitivity to community and diversified cultural problems
- Interested in achievement
- Cooperative toward authority
- Awareness of people and social problems

ASSISTANT TEACHER

Training

- Supervised student teaching - 12 hours per week;
  320 hours per year.
- These are either one semester or one year courses.

Courses in:

- Child Development
- General Psychology
- Child Psychology
- Nursery School - Kindergarten Education
  (Including: Philosophy of Nursery School and Kindergarten Programs; Teaching Techniques; Curriculum Planning; Knowledge of Parent-Teacher Relationships)
- Curriculum Materials
  (Including: A Survey of Children's Literature; Creative Arts for Children; Science for Preschoolers; Equipment for Nursery Schools and Kindergartens)
- Music for Children
- Sociology (In particular, Sociology of the Family)
- Nutrition
- English

AIDE

Training

- Supervised student teaching - 20 hours per week;
  120 hours for an intensive six-week program.

Courses in:

- Workshop in Teaching Techniques
  Understanding of Child Behavior; Program Planning; Sensitivity Training (attitudes and values)
- Dynamics of the Child - Study of Child Development
  (Including: Knowledge of stages of growth of normal children between the ages of two and five, with emphasis on understanding their emotional, social and physical capabilities and ways in which they learn; Differences in behavior patterns of children from various socio-economic backgrounds; Peer and family relationships; Values; Self-concepts - ego development, Record taking and observations of children's behavior)
- The School - Philosophy of Education
  (Including: Physical setup of plant; Philosophy of the School; Teacher and Program; Parental Relationships; Use of community resources and agencies; Child in Poverty)
- Curriculum Materials
  (Including: A survey of Children's Literature; Creative Arts for Children, Science for Preschoolers)
- Special seminar in Health, Nutrition, and First Aid
- Music for Children
- Remedial Reading Program (Tailored to the needs of each student)

ASSISTANT TEACHER

Duties

The assistant teacher is expected to perform most of the same duties as the head teacher, but is not responsible for the overall program.

Program Activities:

- Direct individual children and groups in any area of the curriculum - including, reading stories, presenting music, introducing creative activities
- Keep records and write reports
- Supervise and handle individual children and groups
- Understand the causes behind children's behavior and deal with behavioral problems
- Acquire a knowledge of the community setting
- Participate in all school meetings - staff, faculty, parent
- Ability to work effectively with other disciplines

Routine Duties:

- Assist teacher in setting up and preparation of creative materials, such as: paints, dough, collages and science projects
- Help teacher supervise all other activities, including: water play, block and housekeeping corners, and outdoor play
- Help teacher in routines of: cleaning up, toileting, snack or lunch time, rest time, and dressing
- Help teacher plan and execute trips

AIDE

Duties

The aide is expected to assist in many of the same duties as the assistant teacher, but is not responsible for the overall program.

Program Activities:

- Prepare painting materials and assist during activity
- Assist with music program - singing and rhythms
- Read stories
- Assist in dramatics and creative role playing
- Plan games
- Assist and plan science materials and nature trips
- Use verbal skills with children
- Participate in program planning, and in staff meetings to discuss children's development
- Act as a liaison to families, giving feedback to the head teacher

Routine Duties:

- Supervise children's activities
- Prepare materials and cleanup of equipment, and supervise children in cleanup
- Set up and serve snacks and lunch
- Accompany children en route to and from school, on trips, and to medical appointments
- Dress children
- Set up cots for rest
- Assist children with wash-up and toileting
- Assist in care of pets

"LOWERING TEACHER LOADS -- TITLE I TEACHER AIDE PROGRAM"

Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, Georgia

LOWERING TEACHER LOADS -- TITLE I TEACHER AIDE PROGRAM

The report of the planning committee for the Title I program which met during the summer of 1965 is congruent with the recommendations made by the 1955 Committee for the White House Conference on Education concerning the use of teacher aides. The conference recommendations as reported by Cronin[1] were:

> The teacher's job--in all subjects and at all grade levels--should be carefully analyzed to determine which duties can be safely and economically delegated to personnel not qualified as teachers. The major emphasis should be: to strengthen the effectiveness of the teacher's educational services to the learner, to relieve the teacher of the many time-consuming tasks which may be as well done by persons of subprofessional or nonprofessional rank, and whose services are thus less costly, and to enhance the professional status of the teacher.

A summary report of replies to a request for information on the use of teacher aides by selected school administrators who attended the National Conference on Educating the Disadvantaged was made recently at the University of Wisconsin.[2] In part, this summary states that:

1. There is a great and growing interest in the use of teacher aides throughout the country;

2. There is a recognized need to clarify roles and improve training;

3. Aides have been found useful at both the elementary and secondary levels though they function differently at different levels;

4. Experiences in using aides is almost universally regarded as resulting in improved educational programs;

5. Most schools are liberalizing their use of aides, permitting or, more often, unofficially the use of aides in instruction related tasks such as reading to small groups, helping small groups with review, assisting individuals with seat-work, marking papers, assisting with programming instructional materials;

6. A few state departments of education seem to be liberalizing their stipulations in the use of aides in teaching tasks provided these are under the direction of qualified teachers;

7. There seems to be no problem of lack of candidates for aide jobs; and

8. The full time paid aide is generally preferred to the volunteer aide.

Further review of the literature indicated that there is neither established performance criteria nor a general consensus as to the activities of teacher aides...

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[1] Cronin, Joseph M. "What's All This About 'Teacher Aides'?" California Journal of Secondary Education, 1959, Vol. 34, pp. 390-397.

[2] Ferver, Jack. "Summary of My Request for Information on Teacher Aides," University of Wisconsin Extension, October 5, 1966.

"ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY TEACHER AIDES LISTED BY CATEGORIES"

Atlanta Public Schools, Research and Development Division,
Atlanta, Georgia

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY TEACHER AIDES LISTED BY CATEGORIES

I. INSTRUCTION

- Supervises free play, activities to develop motor skills, interest groups, safety drills, playground, pupils entering and leaving building, and physical education activities.

- Helps small groups or individuals under teacher supervision, arranges room and bulletin boards, makes teaching equipment available, makes inter-school communication possible, helps with housekeeping, and develops curriculum according to plan.

- Teaches new games, shows children how to hold pencils, brushes, etc.

- Performs clerical tasks such as making pupil lists, makes school reports, duplicates work on ditto machine, and operates a mimeograph machine.

- Assists teachers by recognizing instructional needs of pupils, selects materials and aids, groups pupils for instruction, listens to reports made by pupils, makes lesson plans, collects and organizes work handed in, gives out materials, puts work on board, sets up and operates audio-visual equipment, instructs pupils in basic skills, assembles materials for science experiments, makes arrangements for special trips, delivers messages, makes aids, provides individual instruction, takes over class for teacher in case of emergency, and takes care of equipment.

II. EVALUATION AND RECORD MAINTENANCE

- Records grades on report cards, test grades on permanent records, and attendance data in State register.

- Checks pupil performance of assigned tasks, work folders, activity book exercises, and corrects tests (formal and informal) with key.

- Prepares graphs and charts.

- Monitors during tests.

- Averages grades.

- Mimeographs or duplicates tests and exercises.

- Listens to reports and keeps progress reports on individual pupil progress.

III. INDIVIDUAL HELP

- Helps slower children review difficult work, helps pupils with physical examinations, assists pupils in using audio-visual aids, secures special services for pupils, and helps pupils make up work.

- Provides special help, such as conducting drills with flash cards.
- Checks with children to see if they know their address, telephone number, etc.
- Helps slower children review difficult work.
- Elaborates on material presented by teacher.
- Listens to pupils.
- Counsels pupils regarding health, hygiene, etc.

IV. COUNSELS AND ADVISES PUPIL

- Counsels pupils about personal problems, attitudes and study habits, individual work, and classwork projects.
- Aids newly enrolled pupils in adjusting to school.
- Guides pupils in developing good sportsmanship.
- Gives individual assistance to pupils after school.
- Reassures the handicapped.
- Listens to children.
- Plans special activities for children with problems.
- Helps with enrichment programs.

V. DISCIPLINE

- Guides pupils in gaining group acceptance and peer approval, and children who have not learned self-control.
- Takes charge of class when teacher is out of room.
- Talks with individuals about self-discipline and makes rules with children.
- Confers with principal, other teachers, and/or other team members about pupil behavior.
- Accompanies groups of pupils to concerts, ballets, plays, etc.
- Sponsors and leads groups of character building organizations.
- Makes referrals for disciplinary action.
- Explains school policies.

- Isolates unruly children and gives individual attention for brief periods of time.
- Stays near disruptive child.
- Shows love and acceptance.

VI. PARENT SUBSTITUTE

- Offers a sympathetic ear, conveys warmth, shows general interest in pupils, and comforts pupils when in distress.
- Guides pupils in self-direction and in assuming individual and group responsibility.
- Shows admiration when a child achieves.
- Helps children with wraps, tying shoes, caring for clothes, finding lost coats and lunch boxes, etc.
- Gives first aid to pupils.
- Listens to children when approached.
- Sews clothes accidentally ripped.
- Displays work worthy to be shown.
- Deals with temporarily unhappy children.
- Disciplines pupils when needed.

VII. CONFERS AND MAKES REFERRAL ON BEHALF OF PUPIL

- Types referral reports and notices, etc. to send to parents.
- Calls parents regarding absentees.
- Requests materials and supplies, such as films, books, art supplies, etc.
- Participates in PTA and faculty meetings.

VIII. EXTRA-CURRICULA ACTIVITIES

- Assists with making textbook inventories.
- Helps with special activities, such as art show, science fair, sports, out of school trips, and special programs such as producing plays, etc.

- Collects and checks permission slips; collects money from pupils for pictures, lunches, concert tickets, trips, school insurance, etc.
- Attends PTA, school-related functions, functions for scouts, and other youth organizations.
- Types stencils, operates ditto machine, etc.
- Takes care of children with minor illnesses.
- Arranges flowers brought by children.
- Helps with decorations for special events.
- Sponsors class parties.

IX. HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Assumes clerical responsibilities such as typing reports for parents, operating duplicating machine and checking reports for parent's signature, etc.
- Prepares notices to parents about school events and school bulletins to be sent home.
- Collects money for March of Dimes or other approved drives.
- Provides baby sitting service for PTA.
- Participates in open house activities and community affairs (civic clubs, etc.)
- Acquaints pupils about community resources.

X. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Makes plans for career advancement.
- Confers with teachers on problems
- Travels to other sections of country and/or abroad.
- Attends in-service training sessions.
- Observes teachers in classroom.
- Reads professional literature.
- Investigates newer educational trends.

"DETAILED LIST OF POTENTIAL TEACHER AIDE ACTIVITIES"

Atlanta Public Schools, Research and Development Division,
Atlanta, Georgia

DETAILED LIST OF POTENTIAL TEACHER AIDE ACTIVITIES

INSTRUCTION

1. Recognizing instructional needs of pupils.
2. Helping small groups or individuals under teacher supervision.
3. Duplicating work on ditto machine, mimeographing, etc.
4. Selecting materials and aids for use in instruction.
5. Grouping pupils for instruction.

6. Selecting methods of instruction.
7. Listening to reports made by pupils.
8. Supervising free play.
9. Making lesson plans.
10. Collecting and organizing work handed in, giving out materials, etc.

11. Putting work on board planned by teacher.
12. Setting up and operating audio-visual equipment.
13. Making home assignments.
14. Instructing pupils in basic skills.
15. Helping plan and arrange room bulletin boards, etc.

16. Directing special programs, such as socio-drama, role playing, etc.
17. Reading to class or small groups.
18. Teaching new games and supervising physical education.
19. Teaching children how to hold pencils, brushes, etc.
20. Assembling materials for science experiments.

21. Supervising activities in relation to developing motor skills.
22. Planning the curriculum.
23. Planning classroom organization.
24. Supervising playground activities.
25. Helping make teaching equipment available.

26. Making arrangements for special trips.
27. Delivering messages to school personnel.
28. Helping make inter-school communication possible.
29. Making aids for use in the instructional program.
30. Registering pupils.

31. Providing individual instruction.
32. Supervising special pupil interest groups.
33. Supervising safety drills.
34. Planning and coordinating assembly programs.
35. Developing curriculum according to plans.

36. Developing teaching plans.
37. Supervising playground duty.
38. Taking over class for teachers in case of emergency.
39. Taking care of physical education equipment.
40. Helping with housekeeping in classroom and other school areas.

41. Supervising pupils entering and leaving building.
42. Relieving teacher for a regular break during the day.
43. Performing clerical tasks, such as making pupil lists, etc.
44. Preparing school reports.
45. Ordering school supplies, equipment, books, etc.

EVALUATION AND RECORD MAINTENANCE

46. Recording information in State register.
47. Recording grades on report cards.
48. Recording test grades in permanent record.
49. Correcting test (formal and informal) with key.
50. Developing tests.

51. Administering formal tests.
52. Monitoring during test.
53. Checking pupil performance of assigned tasks.
54. Observing students and recording behavior.
55. Preparing graphs or charts.

56. Making decisions regarding promotion or retention of pupils.
57. Retesting pupils.
58. Making progress reports to parents.
59. Listening to student's presentation of reports.
60. Checking work folders of students.

61. Checking activity book exercises.
62. Keeping progress report on individual improvement.
63. Averaging grades.
64. Mimeographing or duplicating tests and exercises for class.

INDIVIDUAL HELP

65. Providing special help, such as drilling with flash cards, spelling, and play activities.
66. Checking children to see if they know their name, address, telephone number, alphabet, counting, etc.
67. Helping slower children review difficult work.
68. Helping with hearing, eye, or other physical examinations.
69. Providing supplementary work for advanced pupils.

70. Elaborating on material already presented by teacher.
71. Aiding pupils with minor injuries or illnesses.
72. Helping individual pupils use audio-visual aids.
73. Helping secure special services for pupils when needed.
74. Helping individuals on special projects.

75. Helping pupils who have been absent to make up work.
76. Providing individual instruction after school.
77. Writing anecdotal records.
78. Listening to students.
79. Giving standard test to individuals who did not take test when group had it.

80. Counseling pupils regarding health, hygiene, etc.
81. Making sociograms of pupils.

COUNSELS AND ADVISES PUPILS

82. Discussing conduct in halls, auditorium, cafeteria, etc.
83. Giving individualized assistance to pupils after school.
84. Talking with small groups about classwork project.
85. Advising pupils about individual work.
86. Aiding in development of good sportsmanship.

87. Guiding pupils in setting up goals of self-discipline.
88. Counseling pupils about personal problems.
89. Counseling individuals concerning attitudes and study habits.
90. Reassuring the handicapped.
91. Planning conferences with pupils when needed.

92. Aiding newly enrolled pupils adjust to school.
93. Listening to children.
94. Planning special activities for children with problems.
95. Helping with enrichment of accelerated group.

DISCIPLINE

96. Taking charge of class when teacher is out of room.
97. Guiding group acceptance and peer approval.
98. Talking with individuals about self-discipline.
99. Conferring with principal, other teachers and/or other team members.
100. Participating in parent-teacher-pupil conferences.

101. Supervising pupils outside the classroom (cafeteria, playground, hall, bus loading, etc.)
102. Sponsoring and leading groups of character building organizations.
103. Accompanying groups of pupils when they attend special programs (concerts, ballets, plays, etc.)
104. Making referrals for disciplinary action.
105. Explaining school policies.

106. Making rules with children.
107. Guiding children who have not learned self-control.
108. Isolating unruly children and giving individual attention for brief periods of time.
109. Being near disruptive child.
110. Showing love and acceptance.

PARENT SUBSTITUTE

111. Giving first aid to pupils.
112. Listening to children talk when approached.
113. Sewing clothes accidentally ripped.
114. Displaying work worthy to be shown.
115. Assisting with physical examinations.

116. Offering a sympathetic ear, conveying warmth, sympathy, and general interest
117. Dealing with temporarily unhappy children.
118. Helping find lost coats, lunch boxes, etc.
119. Disciplining pupils when needed.
120. Expressing approval of new clothes, hair cut, personal appearances, etc.

121. Showing admiration when a child achieves.
122. Advising pupils about personal hygiene and grooming.
123. Guiding pupils in self-direction.
124. Comforting pupils when they are in distress.
125. Teaching pupils to tie shoes and care for clothes.

126. Helping children with wraps.
127. Guiding pupils in assuming individual and group responsibility.

CONFER WITH PARENTS REGARDING EDUCATION OF PUPILS

128. Reporting pupil progress and failure to parents.
129. Explaining instructional programs to parents.
130. Inviting parents to attend programs or exhibits put on by students.
131. Discussing special pupils problems with parents, such as attitudes, study habits, health, attendance.
132. Soliciting parent's cooperation when making referrals for testing, health services, etc.

133. Making home visits when needed.
134. Attending Grade Mothers' meetings.
135. Typing reports, notices, etc. to send to parents.
136. Participating in PTA meetings.
137. Having individual conferences with parents at school.

138. Calling parents regarding absentees.
139. Scheduling conferences for teacher and parents.

CONFER WITH OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

140. Conferring with special services personnel, such as guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, etc.
141. Conferring with resource personnel, such as physician, psychiatrist, dentist, etc.
142. Requesting materials and supplies, such as films, books, art supplies, etc.
143. Participating in faculty meetings.
144. Planning conferences with team members.

145. Securing information from past teachers.
146. Conferring with departments in the school, such as cafeteria, music, maintenance, physical education, etc.
147. Participating in grade-level meetings.
148. Conferring with the student council.
149. Conferring with the Central and Area Office staffs.

150. Collecting and giving information on students withdrawing and entering.
151. Making calls about repair work on teaching aids.
152. Making contacts with speech and hearing teachers.
153. Conferring with special teachers, such as art, music, speech therapist, etc.

EXTRA-CURRICULA ACTIVITIES

154. Assisting with textbook inventory.
155. Attending PTA and school-related functions.
156. Assisting with special activities, such as art show, science fair, sports, etc.
157. Attending functions for scouts, and other youth organizations.
158. Collecting and checking permission slips.

159. Advising student council, school clubs, organizations, etc.
160. Assisting with out-of-school trips.
161. Collecting money from pupils for pictures, lunches, concert tickets, trips, school insurance, etc.
162. Typing stencils, operating ditto, etc.
163. Taking care of children with minor illnesses.

164. Arranging flowers brought by children.
165. Sponsoring class parties.
166. Helping with decorations for special events.
167. Assisting with special programs, such as producing plays, playing piano, assembly programs, etc.

HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

168. Keeping data up-to-date on pupil's address, telephone, etc.
169. Preparing deficiency reports to parents.
170. Making home visitations.
171. Assuming clerical responsibility, such as typing reports for parents, duplicating, checking for parent's signature, etc.
172. Planning and participating in open house activities.

173. Sending notes or cards recognizing achievements of pupils.
174. Checking with home about health information, absentees, etc.
175. Preparing school bulletins to be sent home.
176. Helping with school newsletter.
177. Conferring with parents about using community resources.

178. Scheduling teacher-parent conferences.
179. Sending notes to parents when educational trips are planned.
180. Calling parent or sending notes for special functions as Play Day and PTA.
181. Contacting driving chairman about field trips.
182. Notifying parents of sickness and accidents.

183. Providing baby sitting service for PTA.
184. Making telephone calls for information on pupils.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

185. Assisting with community surveys.
186. Helping plan various training programs for adults.
187. Working with community groups on improvement programs, such as parks, playgrounds, etc.
188. Taking an active part in community affairs (civic clubs, etc.)
189. Acquainting pupils about community resources.

190. Making preschool visitations.
191. Collecting money for March of Dimes or other approved drives.
192. Making home visitations during the school year.
193. Acquainting community of school needs through PTA and other groups.
194. Interpreting educational policies, educational issues and new methods to public.

195. Supervising after school program with teacher's help.
196. Helping to inform community about pupils registration.
197. Accompanying small children to student council meetings to help them make reports.
198. Preparing notices to parents of school events.
199. Inviting community persons to speak to school groups.

200. Helping to inform the community of elections, registration deadlines, etc.

MAKING REFERRALS TO OTHER AGENCIES

201. Typing referral reports.
202. Arranging appointments for teacher with agency's staff.
203. Helping gather information on child to be referred.
204. Copying and sending pupil data to other schools.
205. Referring pupils to community organizations, such as youth, civic, social, recreational, political, etc.

206. Referring pupils to clergy.
207. Conferring with law enforcement representatives about pupils.
208. Working with the guidance committee.
209. Selecting appropriate agency for referrals.
210. Referring pupils to special school services, such as psychological, nurse, counseling, social worker, etc.

211. Referring pupils to Health Department, Welfare, Guidance Clinic, etc.
212. Administering special tests when pupils are being referred.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

213. Making plans for career advancement.
214. Participating in professional organizations.
215. Conferring with teachers on problems.
216. Traveling to other sections of country and/or abroad.
217. Attending in-service training sessions.

218. Taking increment courses, seminars, etc.
219. Observing teachers in classroom.
220. Working on research projects.
221. Reading professional literature.
222. Investigating newer educational trends.

223. Participating in curriculum planning.
224. Attending teacher orientation program.
225. Conferring with resource teachers.

"A PROGRAM FOR THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF IN THE DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

Detroit Public Schools, 5057 Woodward, Continuing
Education Department, Division for Improvement
of Instruction, Special Projects, Division,
Detroit, Michigan

A PROGRAM FOR THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF IN THE DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I. THE NEED AND HISTORY OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

The conception of the role of the professional teacher has not changed significantly in the past century. One hundred years ago, the teacher taught all of the students who came to him in a one-room schoolhouse. Today, largely because of the vast increases in the numbers of students enrolled in the nation's schools, the schoolhouse has many classrooms under one roof and most teachers teach a collection of students all of whom are the same age and are studying the same subject during the minutes they are in the individual teacher's classroom. Refinements in the classification of students, in other words, have been made; but the role of the classroom teacher has not changed. Once the doors of many modern classrooms are closed, it would be difficult to distinguish todays' teacher from his century-past counterpart.

But while the role of the teacher has remained virtually unchanged, a vast expansion has taken place in other roles which, in modern educational thinking at least, "support" the teacher. There are the college professors of education with their numerous specialties, the administrators of school systems from the superintendent through the supervisors to the building principals, the school psychologists and school social workers, the custodians and the audio-visual technicians and the school secretaries. The expansion of roles seems almost limitless, but at the point where the modern boy or girl comes in contact with the educational system, the classroom, little significant change has taken place. And significant change must take place precisely at this point if twentieth century schools are to meet the demands which society is thrusting upon them. It is the classroom teacher who must have help and that help must be available where the school population is: in the classrooms and the communities where people live. The trend over the past century to expand the professional staff in the central offices of huge urban school systems and on the pleasant campuses of huge universities has resulted in major advancements in curriculum and instructional methodology. But too often these advances do not show up in the classroom or take decades to become a part of the program of education in the schools.

The nation's teachers are frequently blamed for the failure of the schools to change in any meaningful way. "We tell them how to do their job better," complain the university professors and school system experts, "And they go right back to their classrooms and teach the same way they always have!" This description may be accurate, but in its failure to probe for the reasons why teachers resist change lies its fundamental untruth. All too frequently, teachers do not change because they cannot change. The daily demands of their jobs - emotional demands, physical demands, and the frequency with which these demands occur - often prevent teachers from doing anything much beyond surviving. The weak teachers quit, the strong ones seek advancement to administrative and university positions, and the ones who remain concentrate on staying alive until the school year ends the next June. Improvement in the learning of pupils, the only improvement which has any real value in the whole business of education, will only come when the teacher's role has been made manageable. And the use of paraprofessionals promises to be the best opportunity in the past century to make the role manageable.

The fact that large numbers of paraprofessionals may be made available to school systems as one result of the war on poverty's efforts to discover new jobs is simply fortuitous. It is also fortuitous that these new jobs are developing at the same time that automation is eliminating many other jobs in which persons with limited training have always made a living. While the concepts and practices of education are among the most complex of the syndromes within which modern man operates, there are many aspects of the syndrome of learning which do not demand extensive training of practitioners. The person who directs the learning processes of students - the teacher - must be brilliantly trained, probably much more so than most of today's teachers are. But other adults who participate in these processes under the teacher's direction do not require such extensive training. The basic problem is to analyze the role of the teacher, decide which portions of the total role must remain the responsibility of the professional and which can be allocated to paraprofessionals, select and train paraprofessionals to perform the services that they can perform, and institute in massive ways these teams of teacher and paraprofessionals into the educational systems of the nation.

For most of the past decade, the Detroit Public Schools have been using paraprofessionals in an increasing number of ways in the classrooms. Lay readers, lunchroom aides, volunteer tutors, teacher aides, hall guards, school-community aides, and many other types of paraprofessionals have been employed in increasing numbers and for an increasing variety of tasks. Detroit schools have experimented with saturating individual schools with aides and have planned and launched both brief, limited training programs for aides and broad, extensive training programs. The experience of the school system with the utilization of paraprofessionals has demonstrated their value, and has also provided the background on which a program for the vast expansion of paraprofessional staff can be based. The principal guidelines for such a program are described in the pages which follow.

The remaining three sections of this text describe in general how the Detroit Public Schools plan to use paraprofessionals if funds become available to employ them in significant numbers. The conceptualization assumes:

1. a ratio of professionals to paraprofessionals of perhaps 2:1 or 3:1;
2. delineation of the tasks of paraprofessionals on the basis of proximity to the instructional functions of the classroom;
3. complete or almost complete funding by the federal government.

These assumptions must be met if the great improvements in education, which the employment of paraprofessionals promise, are ever to be achieved.

II. ORGANIZATION AND SELECTION OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF

One conception of the organization of the paraprofessional staff is to consider paraprofessionals as members of a basic teaching team which might assume the responsibilities for the total instructional program of a group of students. The term "total instructional program" would include the relationships of the school to its community, the involvement of parents in the educational life of their children, the use of a variety of instructional approaches, and the consideration of the physical welfare and comfort of children. Thus, the basic teaching team would provide most of the instructional help needed by a group of children. When specialized help is needed, other types of paraprofessionals would be at the service of the basic teaching team just as highly specialized professionals such as school psychologists and school social workers are available to the professional teaching staff.

One possible arrangement of a basic teaching team which would be responsible for the instruction of a group of 100 students might be:

1 Coordinating Teacher

3 Teachers

3 Instructional Aides

1 Clerical Aide

1 Service Aide

Three classifications of paraprofessionals are included in this basic teaching team. There might be two other classifications. These are: Technical Aids, and School-Community Aides.

These last two types of paraprofessionals would not automatically be members of every basic teaching team, although they would be available to help basic teaching teams whenever these teams needed their assistance. In general, however, the school-community aides would work primarily with the school principal and the school-community agent in developing the schools' relationship with its community. Technical aides would be paraprofessionals with unusual skills and competencies which would augment the work of the teacher.

Technical Aides

Job Description -- The technical aide would be a person highly skilled in technical trades who is not able to secure employment in these trades because of the lack of a formal apprenticeship, the inability to meet a specific educational qualification often required for employment in these trades, the unavailability of jobs in these trades locally, or for other reasons of this type. Technical aides would be able to demonstrate skills which are superior to those of regular teachers in areas such as:

- Photography
- Tailoring
- Homemaking
- Electronics
- Swimming
- Various types of industrial shops
- Architectural and mechanical drafting

Qualifications -- Technical aides would be high school graduates with advanced training in the area of their specialties.

Instructional Aide

Job Description -- The instructional aide would work directly with the teacher in the classroom in the regular instruction of children. His functions would include instruction, guidance, and tutoring. He would help to teach, but only under the careful control and steady supervision of the teacher. He would be the "good right arm" of the teacher, available at all times to help the teacher carry out the teacher's planning for the instruction of the class.

Qualifications -- The instructional aide would be a high school graduate. He would be expected to be able to read fluently, to write with acceptable standards of correctness, and to speak the standard English of the classroom.

School-Community Aide

Job Description -- The school-community aide would work with the principal, the school-community agent, and the school system's Department of School-Relations and Special Services in establishing contact with hard-to-reach parents who rarely, if ever, contact the school or participate in any school activity. The school-community aide would explain school programs to the community, school rules, activities, projects, special services, and general policies. The school-community aide would also feed back to the school the apprehensions, antagonisms, and misunderstandings which are alive in the community. The aim of his efforts is improvement of instruction through increased support by the community of the school and greater involvement of the community in the school's work.

Qualifications -- The major qualifications of the school-community aide is that he be accepted and trusted by the community, and that he have a genuine commitment to the work of the school.

Clerical Aide

Job Description -- The clerical aide would serve in a secretarial capacity to the basic teaching team. He would type and duplicate bulletins, instructional materials prepared by the teachers and instructional aides, and communications to parents. He would prepare bulletin boards and room decorations, do necessary filing, take telephone messages, and serve as receptionist for the teaching team.

Qualifications -- The clerical aide would not have to be a high school graduate, but he would have to have adequate typing ability. He would be expected to be accurate and neat and to have warmth and sincerity of personality.

Service Aide

Job Description -- The service aide would perform the many custodial and helping functions which are constantly required in the operation of a school. Among these are distributing and collecting materials, helping children with their wraps, supervising hallways and lavatories, setting up and running audio-visual equipment, assisting with games in the classroom and on the playground, chauffeuring, and helping with food service.

Qualifications -- The service aide would not have to be a high school graduate. His major qualifications would be a genuine interest in children and a willingness to help in any way to further their education.

Qualifications Pertinent to All Paraprofessional Classifications

All paraprofessionals would be drawn, to the fullest extent possible, from the families living in the community which the school serves. They would be required to pass the regular medical examination of the Detroit Public Schools. They would be expected to complete the training program established by the Detroit Public Schools for the position they will be filling. And they would be encouraged to continue their education through adult education programs leading to a high school diploma, through community college programs leading to associate degrees, and through college to qualify for a teaching certificate...

III. TRAINING OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF

All paraprofessional personnel will be offered a training program on three levels: philosophic, background of education, and operational. It is anticipated that the first two of these levels - philosophic and background of education - would be similar for all classifications of paraprofessional staff. The only difference at these levels would be in the intensity and direction of the training. The third level - operational - would vary greatly and would be based on the tasks which the paraprofessional is expected to perform in the school.

Philosophic Level

1. Introduction to three ethics

   a. Political -- The operation of a democracy, the importance of electing qualified officials, and the understanding of how government operates in relation to the individual.

   b. Legal -- The realization that laws are made by the people, not the police, and that the police are only charged with enforcing them. Implicit in this is the recognition that the basis of the legal ethic is the good of society versus the good of the individual. Many subcultures in U.S. society have never really understood or believed this.

   c. Health -- The understanding of the importance of health and the individual's responsibility in keeping himself, his home, and his community healthy and clean.

2. Provision for Enforcing "Ego-Strength" of the Aide

   a. The role of the paraprofessional would be carefully developed in relation to the function of the total teaching team; he would be helped to see his position in a hierarchy and his opportunity to move upward in that hierarchy.

b. The importance of the work the paraprofessional would be doing and of his ability to do this would be stressed. Also stressed would be his special ability to communicate with the students and the importance to the students of having someone working with them who is not so far removed from them that he cannot "reach" them easily.

c. The paraprofessional would be encouraged to believe that the role he is training for and performing is not his final role in the teaching team. Ultimately, he can become a teacher.

d. The training of the paraprofessional would be structured and paced so that he will succeed from the very beginning. The training will emphasize other skills useful in instructing children in addition to reading.

e. Throughout the training program, the emphasis will be on a new concept of teaching, one that will enable a far-higher percentage of children in school to succeed. The paraprofessional's contribution to this improved success for students will be emphasized constantly.

f. The paraprofessionals will work with teachers in defining and developing the aide's role. In this way the aide will feel that he has been consulted and his ideas considered. He will not be merely presented with a task and told to see whether he can do it or not.

Background Level

a. The responsibility of schools and education in United States society.

b. Child growth and development, including the practices of group management and discipline.

c. Social class structure, attitudes, and values, including the major racial and religious cultures in the United States.

d. The nature of language:

   1) Its psychological control of each human being.

   2) Its learning and use.

Operational Level

It is anticipated that the training at the operation level will vary with the type of work which the paraprofessional will be doing. For the classifications other than "technical aide" the training will include:

1. Service Aides

   a. The organization of schools for instruction.

   b. The services which the service aide can perform on the basic teaching team to improve the instructional process.

c. The operation of machines used in the instructional process such as film and filmstrip projectors, teaching machines, visual aids and devices.

d. The geography of the community and the community's function in the instructional process.

2. Clerical Aides

   a. The organization of the schools for instruction.

   b. School and classroom record-keeping and reporting.

   c. The operation of machines used in preparing instructional materials and the ordering of instructional materials and aids from central libraries of the Detroit Public Schools.

   d. The role of the clerical aide in the basic teaching team.

3. Instructional Aides

   a. The training program for instructional aides would be three weeks in duration. Morning sessions would be devoted to the philosophic and background of education levels. In addition to the concepts itemized above for these two levels, the morning sessions of the training program for instructional aides would also include:

      1) The organization of schools for instruction.

      2) How students learn and teachers teach.

      3) Content vehicles for instruction.

      4) The role of instructional aides in the basic teaching team.

   b. Afternoon sessions of the training program for instructional aides would consist of on-the-job training with the teacher to whom each aide will ultimately be assigned.

   c. A critique-and-planning session of one hour's duration will be held each day after school closes. In this session, the teacher and the instructional aide will study the teacher's lesson plan for the next afternoon's work. This session has several purposes:

      1) It will force teachers to analyze their plans for the next day and determine what, in fact, they expect to do with their classes.

      2) It will require teachers to consider what activities in their lesson plans could actually be performed by instructional aides. This self-analysis of the role of the teacher is necessary if the teacher is to modify that role willingly.

3) It will help the aide understand the purposes of the learning experiences and instructional methodology.

4) It will give the aide an opportunity to learn what he is to do, ask questions, and generally gain confidence in his ability to contribute to the learning process.

d. To facilitate the logistics of this training program, the sessions will be held wherever possible in the school to which the group of aides will ultimately be assigned. Teachers will join the aides in the morning sessions of the first day of the program and the afternoon session of the last day of the program. Substitute teachers will be provided to teach the teachers' classes on these two half-days...

4. School-Community Aide

a. The training program for school-community aides would follow the same schedule as the program for instructional aides.

b. In addition to the concepts itemized earlier for the philosophic and background of education levels, the morning sessions of the training program for school-community agents would also include:

1) The organization of the schools for instruction.

2) The role of visiting teachers, the school system's attendance department, the Department of School Relations and Special Services, and the services of the metropolitan community's social agencies.

3) The relationship of the school-community agent and his aide to the school's principal.

4) The role of the school-community aide in the total instructional process.

c. Afternoon sessions of the training program for school-community aides would consist of on-the-job training with the school-community agent to whom each aide will ultimately be assigned. These sessions will provide:

1) A better understanding of the community and its power structure, and the relationships of the community to the school.

2) An opportunity to learn through observation and practices how a school-community agent and his aide can function most effectively.

3) An improved understanding of the children in the school and the background from which they come.

"REPORT OF THE PILOT PROJECT FOR THE TRAINING OF TEACHER AIDES"

Detroit Public Schools, Martin Kalish, Principal, Miller Junior High School
Director of Pilot Project, Summer, 1966

REPORT OF THE PILOT PROJECT FOR THE TRAINING OF TEACHER AIDES

...Teachers in most cases accepted the aides readily and indicated that they were of great help, especially in the areas of clerical, monitorial and routine tasks. By releasing the teachers in these ways, most teachers found that they could provide more individual attention and come closer to teaching a full 60 minutes out of every hour. More teachers requested aides than could be provided under existing allocations.

There is no longer any question in our minds that an aide can be successful and make a significant contribution to any school in the areas of clerical, monitorial, and routine tasks. It was also true, however, on the basis of our experience that teachers had to provide the aides with the in-service training necessary for them to function effectively. The precise position of the teacher and the aide in the classroom needed study. Training, in advance of placement, we felt, would uncover new problems and ensure high performance...

To give some indication of the breadth of classroom experiences, the following is a list of classes in which teacher aides functioned on a subprofessional level:

Head Start
Remedial Math, 4, 5
Library
English, 8A
Graphic Arts
Music, 4-12
Plastics, Leather, 4-9
Homemaking, Advanced
Amer. History, 11B-11A
Physics
Dance, 1-9
19th Century Archaeology
Biology, 10B-11th
Family Living, 12th
English, 9B
Math, 7B-7A
Piano
English, 11th
Remedial Math, 4-10
Remedial Reading, 2-6
World History, 9B-9A
Math, 8B
Drama
Industrial Arts, 4-6
Amer. History II, 11A-12B
Family Economics, 12th
Art Appreciation
Adv. Instrumental
Food, Clothing, 4-6
Typing, 11-12th
English, 10th
Civics, 12th
Clothing, 10-12
Homemaking
Electronics, 10-12
Science, 4-9
Typing, 4-9
Math

SOME SUCCESSFUL SUBPROFESSIONAL TASKS FOR TRAINED TEACHERS' AIDES

Helping to determine report card marks.

Showing and commenting on film strips.

Checking homework.

Tutoring individual students.

Demonstrating to the class.

Supervising class work while teacher works with a small group.

Being in complete charge of the class for brief periods.

Reading to the class.

Making health examinations.

Leading play and games.

Making anecdotal notes on students.

Encouraging students to extend themselves.

Sponsoring a student activity.

Working on a faculty committee.

Preparing visual materials.

Suggesting possible classroom activities.

Monitoring tests.

Working with small groups on a project.

Leading oral reading.

Correcting student oral speech errors.

Dictating objective tests, spelling words, etc.

Acting out stories.

Supervising practice (piano, dance).

Stopping disruptive student behavior.

Arranging for speakers.

Relating work or travel experience to the class.

Helping to coach a school team.

Counseling students on safety and health.

...With respect to the kind of training that an aide should receive before entering a classroom the teachers unaminously recommend the following:

> Pre-service experience, as in this Pilot Project is necessary, for it provides cultural enrichment, and over-view of problems faced in educating youth, and certain familiarity with the forms and language of the classroom. This training can only be done successfully by local educators themselves and may not be shifted to someone else or some other agency. It follows, too, that the employer must spell out the remuneration and working condition rights of aides if the program is to attract and hold the most qualified candidate.

The teachers felt strongly that minimum qualifications needed to be established for the two specific categories of aides. Staff aides who work in the school but not in the classroom should be 18 years or older and be able to achieve at least at the seventh grade level on a national test. Teachers aides, because they work in a classroom, should be at least 18 years of age and have a minimum seventh grade achievement for elementary school placement.

For junior high school placement a high school diploma, or an equivalency certificate, and minimum ninth grade achievement would be required. For high school placement a high school diploma, or an equivalency certificate, and a minimum tenth grade achievement on a national test...

Detroit is hopeful that the teacher aide program will continue to expand with new emphasis on pre-service and in-service training for staff and teacher aides. We feel that our experience with the Pilot Project in the Training of Teacher Aides has demonstrated conclusively that the lay person, given the required training, can make a major impact on the total educational quality of the school. Properly handled, the teacher aide program can move educational quality forward in a most significant way. It is a new horizon both for education and the aides themselves. It has the potential for both human and educational uplift.

"TEENAGE TEACHER AIDE PROJECT"

Albert G. Leep, Frank Creason, The National Elementary Principal, Vol. XLVI, No. 6, May 1967, pp 45-48.

TEENAGE TEACHER AIDE PROJECT

Rural Appalachia is confronted by problems associated with poverty which, at first glance, appear to be very similar to those so evident in the inner-city belts of our large metropolitan areas. Certainly the deprivation of learning experiences, health facilities, and aspiration levels of youth commonly coupled with poverty are found in both the rural and the urban settings. However, the Appalachian area is having to deal with a problem that is unique to rural pockets of poverty, namely, the emigration of its youth. Every year, many young people, discouraged by lack of opportunities for employment locally, leave for the large cities to seek employment there. Those who remain must cope with steadily decreasing chances to obtain stable and rewarding jobs, and they settle into poverty.

Within the larger matrix of poverty, three major educational problems confront the communities of Appalachia:

1. Schools with limited economic support and a diminishing number of public school teachers

2. Underprivileged preschoolers

3. Appalachian teenagers who cannot find work and have neither the means nor the aspiration to continue their education.

Ohio University efforts to aid in the alleviation of these pressing problems culminated in the initiation of the Teenage Teacher-Aide Program during the summer of 1966.

Objectives

A major aim of this project was to prepare 150 high school teenagers from economically deprived homes in nine counties of southeastern Ohio and Wood County, West Virginia, to work as auxiliary personnel with young children in kindergartens, Head Start centers, and primary grades of elementary schools. The endeavor was planned to improve the quality of education and attack Appalachian poverty by:

1. Attempting to build the confidence and lift the levels of aspiration of teenagers and thereby motivate some high school youths to continue their education

2. Preparing teenagers for an economically productive vocation which could be utilized while completing their high school education

3. Providing a community source of trained paraprofessionals to help alleviate the shortage of teachers in Head Start and other preschool areas.

Another objective was to provide firsthand summer education experiences for 75 prospective teachers enrolled in Ohio University. It was hoped that by having this experience some of these university students might be motivated to teach in deprived areas after graduation from college. As college sponsors living and working closely with the participating high school students, prospective teachers had the opportunity to establish a wholesome counseling relationship with participating teenage teacher aides. Also included in the experiences of the prospective teachers was the opportunity to work with preschool children enrolled in Head Start centers throughout the area included in the program. The work experience with young children and the ten-week period of association with the high school student participants gave prospective teachers an insight into the reality of poverty and its influences. At the same time, these experiences dissipated any preconceived idea that economically deprived children are a "different breed," lacking the abilities and potentials commonly associated with children from more affluent backgrounds.

Another aim of this program was to obtain research data which could be used to answer questions about 1) the components necessary to the successful preparation of teacher aides, 2) the role of teacher aides as perceived by professional educators working in preschool and school situations, and 3) the feasibility of utilizing high school students to meet the immediate needs in this country for educational opportunities for preschool and early school experiences for deprived children.

Structure of the Program

Phase I

The program was designed to operate in four phases. In Phase I, the prospective teacher aides and the college student sponsors participated in a five-week workshop held on the campus of Ohio University. During this part of the program, the high school particpant underwent medical screening, testing, and general orientation and was assigned to a college sponsor who lived and worked with the student in a residential setting throughout the summer program.

The high school participants and their respective college sponsors were then divided into five instructional groups to each of which was assigned an experienced kindergarten teacher who moved with his group through five areas of concentrated instruction directed by an area specialist. One week was devoted to each area of content, on a rotating cycle. The general theme of the instruction was learning about young children, namely, the developmental pattern of child growth, the possible implications of the environment upon behavior, and the uniqueness of the individual.

A concerted effort was made to develop within the aide the attitude that true educational experience for young children evolves from situations in which children are encouraged to broaden the range of their knowledge, to follow interests, to feel the joy of knowing, to be curious, and to question. Therefore, the role of an aide, like that of a teacher is one of supporting children in the process of personal development. It involves a positive attitude about the worth of the individual that will permeate all interactions with children.

Great emphasis was placed on the importance of early learning experiences in the on-going development of a child, and, with help, the aides developed a repertoire of materials, experiences, and skills appropriate for aiding in the instruction of young children in language arts, science, music, art, and recreation. For example, they selected books and read aloud to the children; they presented and discussed a brief science experiment; they assisted on a science field trip; they helped with music and art; they presented and kept a record of games appropriate to different age levels and sizes of groups and learned to teach them to children; and they helped with minor first aid.

During the five weeks, provisions were also made for students to observe directly, and indirectly through closed circuit television, two kindergarten classrooms, two Head Start centers, and a private summer play school. Through these facilities, the prospective teacher aides were able to relate the instruction received to a variety of ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and teacher approaches.

Arrangements were also made for periodic group dynamics sessions in which small groups of high school participants and college sponsors met with a faculty discussion leader. The purpose was to encourage independent thinking and to stimulate a realistic appraisal of one's attitudes and capabilities in relation to working as an auxiliary with young children of economically deprived backgrounds.

An equally important aspect of the on-campus program related to the experience students had outside the instructional program. The residential arrangement and the provision for free participation in many college-sponsored social and cultural events encouraged close interaction among the high school participants and the college students. It was felt that the cultural experiences, the responsibility of being "on one's own," and the relationships established with college students would give the high school students an opportunity to gain firsthand information about the values, goals, abilities, and experiences of college-oriented individuals and might encourage them to re-evaluate themselves and determine the alternatives, including college attendance, that might be open to them.

As this phase of the program progressed, a remarkable change in many of the high school students became apparent. Many exhibited a level of confidence and a view of self that was not present before. One high school student, summarizing the influence the campus had on her, said:

> I am not as shy as I was when I first came here. I would never talk to anyone for a very long time. It was always brief. Since I have been with all the nice people here, I have changed considerably. Everyone has recognized these changes in me. As a matter of fact, one of the girls from my school said that the students and teachers would be surprised when they see me this fall because now I am talking all the time.

As the personal concept of self improved, there was a new awareness of personal appearance and an interest in grooming which motivated the planning of special evening seminars on grooming, hair styling, and clothing selection.

The maturing influences of the experiences on campus were expressed by one student in her statement:

> I've found that we have to work for what we have or expect to get. I have decided that the college routine is definitely for me because I love the atmosphere of freedom and the right to choose. I've come to the understanding that everyone has the right to opinions without being criticized - and when criticized I can take it without using protective devices for I realize that it is to help me.

Phase II

Phase II of the program consisted of four weeks of field work in Head Start centers. High school participants and the university student sponsors worked together in centers near the homes of the high school participants. During this period, the high school students lived at home and the university students found temporary housing in the area of the centers to which they were assigned. Both the high school participants and the university student sponsors were assigned by the administrators of the Head Start centers as aides to teachers of classes for culturally deprived preschoolers. A teacher education team from Ohio University traveled to the Head Start centers to supervise the trainees, to assist them with their problems, and to evaluate the success of the student aide and the contributions of the five-week program in preparing the aide for the role expected of him in the field.

Phase III

Following the four weeks of field experience, the high school students and college students returned to the campus for one week. During this week they evaluated the program and their own experiences and tried to synthesize the total experience as it related to their personal growth. At this point, the program was concluded for the university college sponsors, and the high school students returned home to commence the next phase of the program in conjunction with their regular high school activities.

Phase IV

Phase IV, to last from September 1966 until June 1967, will include part-time employment for one to two hours a day in kindergartens, primary classrooms, hospitals, and other community agencies and will provide work experience with young children under the supervision of professionally trained adults. In each community, a practicing teacher, designated as an adviser to the teenage teacher aides, will coordinate the part-time employment and supervise the planning and directing of regularly scheduled child development seminars.

At this stage of the program, an extensive evaluation of the full impact of the program would be premature. However, through the phases now completed, it was possible to gain some indications of the influence the experiences were having on the participants. It would be incorrect to imply that all the participants either exhibited through their behavior or verbally expressed similar reactions to the program, but the following general reactions were typical of feelings expressed following Phase II by a majority of the high school students and university student sponsors.

> I have learned a lot about working with children that I never knew before. I think that under the guidance of our teachers in this program, we can all be useful to our communities and to a very good cause.

> Although I've thought about college a lot, I never really expected to attend one because of the money, but now I think I know some of the many ways a college freshman can get scholarships, funds, etc., to go to school, and I hope I'll be able to qualify for some of these. All in all, the program has done me a world of good. Even if I don't get to college, it will always be useful with my own children.
>
> ...it (the experience) gave me a desire to help those less fortunate than myself.
>
> I have learned a great deal about children and myself from the program. The program has provided a lot of advantages which are good.
>
> I think this has made me a better person all around.

As to the contributions made by the aides to the Head Start center, the following observation is indicative of those found throughout the various centers:

> I think that young people do a very good job as teachers' aides. The children like them and especially enjoy watching when an aide participates in something with them. It seems that a younger person's enthusiasm and energy influence the children's ideas.

One administrator of a Head Start program, during his visit to the campus phase of the program, stated that the aides would be better prepared to work with young children than some of the teachers that his center was able to employ. His prediction was borne out by those observing Phase II of the program and by two Head Start teachers who said:

> He (the aide) had such a fine way with children and had so many good ideas for science activities that I asked him to lead the science discussion each day.
>
> At first, I didn't want one of the aides because in past summers I had untrained aides assigned to me and they were more trouble than they were worth. I soon found that these girls (aides in the Teenage Teacher Aide Program) were different. They knew what to do and had a knowledge of many activities that I didn't have. These aides were a real help.

However, there were a few Head Start teachers who reacted in less positive terms. One retired elementary teacher, employed for the summer, indicated that she did not need help in her classroom. Another felt that she did not want the additional responsibility of working with a teenage aide. Many teachers at the completion of the four weeks described the experience as being a good one for the professional growth of the teacher, because the teacher was required to examine the classroom functioning to determine those activities which could be shared with auxiliary personnel and those which could not.

As stated earlier, many of our questions concerning the program cannot be answered as yet, but those of us involved in the planning and execution of the program are encouraged by 1) the wholesome and maturing influence that the experience has had to date on the high school students, 2) the fact that all but four of the students continuing to attend high school in the areas involved in the program are presently placed in part-time positions as aides, 3) the present indication that the aides are truly assisting in the provision of better education for young children, and 4) the increased interest on the part of the teenager in completing a college preparatory program so that he might attend college.

The teachers share our enthusiasm. As one experienced primary level teacher observed, "Now (with an aide) I will have the time and the help to do some of the important things I have always wanted to do with and for children but couldn't do by myself."

Perhaps by the time the final phase of the program is completed, many elementary administrators will agree with one principal who, at this early stage of having teenage teacher aides, said, "I don't know how we ever did without them."

"RATIONALE FOR THE UTILIZATION OF AUXILIARY PERSONNEL IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS"

Auxiliary School Personnel: Their Roles,
Training, and Institutionalization; Bank Street
College of Education, New York, October 1966, p.4,
(Conducted for the Office of Economic Opportunity)

RATIONALE FOR THE UTILIZATION OF AUXILIARY PERSONNEL IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

...In summary, the multiple benefits which were perceived as possible in all school situations were:

1. To the pupil, by providing more individualized attention by concerned adults, more mobility in the classroom, and more opportunity for innovation;

2. To the teacher, by rendering his role more satisfying in terms of status, and more manageable in terms of teaching conditions;

3. To the other professionals, by increasing the scope and effectiveness of their activities;

4. To the auxiliary, by providing meaningful employment which contributes at one and the same time to his own development and to the needs of society;

5. To the school administrator, by providing some answers to his dilemma of ever increasing needs for school services, coupled with shortage of professionals to meet these needs - *a* solution, not *the* solution, and certainly not a panacea;

6. To family life, by giving auxiliaries, many of whom are or may someday become parents, the opportunity to learn child development principles in a reality situation;

7. To the community at large, by providing a means through which unemployed and educationally disadvantaged persons may enter the mainstream of productivity.

"EDUCATION FOR SLOW LEARNERS"

Willard Abraham, Prepared for the White House Conference on Children and Youth

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EDUCATION FOR SLOW LEARNERS

The American philosophy of education which is based on educating every child to his capacity cannot afford to make exceptions. The loss of potential manpower, the high dropout rate from our schools, the cost of unemployment, delinquency, and crime, the threat to sound family relationships and to individuals within families -- all can be traced at least partly to the neglect of a large segment of our society, the children often referred to as "slow learners."

Because they will become a significant part of our future citizenry and voters, with important jobs in occupations, family, and society, this neglect must be noted, studied, and discussed, and practical solutions offered.

The Problem

These children do not constitute a minor problem -- when one observes their attendance in nearly every classroom, and considers the frequency with which their education is the subject of conferences of teachers and administrators, the amount of concern they cause their parents, and the added price communities pay when their education is inadequate.

With our increasing school population more children will be in this learning category, more will need the parental help and understanding, the school programs, the teachers, and the community concern discussed in the pages that follow. And more will be able to profit from the sincere consideration of newer approaches to living and working with these children in our homes, schools, and neighborhoods.

Definitions -- Some writers in the field use IQ (Intelligence Quotient) exclusively in describing this group, others confuse the issue because of awkward terminology, and still others contribute unclear thinking induced by vague discussions of aptitudes, talents, achievement, abilities, and intelligence. IQ's of 80 to 95, 85 or less, 70 to 89, 50 to 75, and 50 to 89 are found in the literature on this subject. Terms like the following appear: Borderline, borderline retarded, low normal, dull, dull normal, mildly handicapped, dullards, backward, nonacademic. One refers to "island children," the ones who "are surrounded and isolated in our educational hierarchy." However, agreement is fairly general that "slow learners" constitute 15 to 20 percent of our school population.

For a consistent point of departure in this paper, the following ingredients of a definition of slow learners are proposed:

1. An intelligence range of approximately 75 to 90 IQ, but keeping in mind the limitations of tests and testing personnel and the variations in scores depending on what test is used, who administers it, when it is given, and other factors -- or performance at the 75 to 90 IQ level despite indications of higher capabilities.

2. Children in a regular classroom who do not quite keep up in the early grades and lag behind even more later on.

3. Children who are usually slow in intellectual matters, but not necessarily slow in artistic, mechanical, or social activities.

4. Children who perform below potential because of cultural deprivation in the home or neighborhood, socio-economic conditions, language problems, or an unfortunate school situation.

A distinction may be made between generalized slowness and retardation in specific fields. Although everyone may be described as a slow learner in one or more ways, failing to learn in proportion to our desires, efforts, or instruction, our emphasis here will be on the children who are scholastically below the average because of intellectual limitations.

Common Misunderstandings -- Even in recent years a number of misconceptions and misunderstandings about slow learners have persisted among parents, teachers and others. For example, many still believe that an IQ is an IQ, immobile, unchangeable, set for all time, instead of recognizing the influence on intelligence of a rich or barren environment.

Another idea, which may be comforting but untrue, is that a child who is slow in one area is necessarily superior in others. Nor is there a balance established between verbal abilities (low) and nonverbal ones (high), or book-mindedness (low) and hand-mindedness (high). Hand activities may provide an area of reasonable success because of their concrete, meaningful nature rather than as a compensating factor for low academic abilities; they also may develop, of course, because more time is put into them.

Slow learners do not balance their lower intellectual abilities with greater height and strength. That misconception stems from the fact that they may be the tallest and huskiest in their classrooms -- an easy matter to understand when one also notes that they also may be the oldest because of nonpromotion.

A rather common misunderstanding is that slow learners are potential delinquents. It could be stated more accurately that all children are potential delinquents. Because the environment (home, school, and community) of many slow learners is conducive to delinquent behavior, it may more accurately be assumed that this environment may contribute to both delinquency and slow learning.

It is important to recognize that while backwardness in some children may be innate and permanent, in others it may be accidental, acquired and correctable. One would be mistaken in assuming that in the former case they are slow but will catch up in time. Equally erroneous in the latter situation would be the assumption that all slowness is unalterable. Predictions must be based on the individual and his own potentialities, rather than on generalizations from studies of large groups.

Causes -- The causes of mental and academic slowness in children may be traced to two major areas which are usually intertwined, the innate mental capacity and the influence of environmental factors. Research in medicine and biochemistry may in time bring more understanding of the inborn limitations which must be recognized as key causation factors in many cases.

Sociologists, educators, and parents recognize a large number of other, more likely, causes of slowness. The clear relationship between them and a child's slowness implies that removal or modification of the difficulty may help elevate the achievement level of the child, perhaps even bringing it up to the normal range. The extent or degree of the problem and the length of time it has existed are items inevitably involved in possible correction.

Among the various limiting factors are the following:

- Socio-economic limitations
- Cultural and language deprivations or differences
- Physical factors, based on sight, hearing, immature development, malnutrition, or other health conditions
- Family problems or tensions, anxieties, quarrels, excessive mobility, lack of acceptance of child
- School-related factors, such as irregular attendance, inefficient teaching, distaste for school, poor study habits, repeated failure
- Meager or barren educational resources in home and/or community
- Incongruities among factors of ability, achievement, and aspiration as they relate to each other
- Accidents, infections or diseases resulting in physical or emotional problems
- Inappropriate educational pressures before the child is ready
- Emotional disturbances related to above or other factors
- The absence of drive, inner urge, or motivation, existent but not traceable to any of the factors listed above

The problem of causation becomes more complicated when one recognizes that many thousands of children who possess one or a combination of these factors are not slow learners. Thus, slowness does not inevitably result from a particular circumstance, but seems to be the outcome of combinations of conditions as they join and affect a child. Recognizing the causes and adapting solutions to them are basic in our approach to the slow child.

Pseudo Slow Learning -- A distinction must be made between slow learning due to inherent causes and the kind due to our own limitations of evaluation or environment. When a child performs in the 75 to 90 IQ range because he is cerebral palsied and has limited manipulative skills, a correction factor must be considered before judgments are made. When a child from a language or culture different from that on which a particular test was validated acquires a low score, additional work must be done to secure an accurate evaluation for him. Merely translating the test into his language may not be sufficient because of his cultural and socio-economic deviations. Numerous studies have attempted to indicate how children who are not really slow learning may appear to be so because of inadequate testing machinery.[2]

Additional areas of pseudo slow learning include bright children working not only beneath their capacity but also below the so-called normal, and children with emotional or physical problems. Individualized programs based on accurate child study are needed for these children as well as for all others performing at a slower than average rate.

Characteristics of Slow Learners -- Just as with any large group of average or above average children or adults, slow learners are varied in their physical and emotional characteristics and development. No single trait describes them other than the one of learning more slowly and to a lesser degree. Nor can one determine true capacity by appearance or by superficial observation of performance; teachers of Edison, Newton, and others attempted, and failed. Slowness in school as a single factor is not sufficient, for in another educational setting the child may perform on an average level. The differences from other children are in degree rather than in kind, as variations exist among all of us.

Although some writers in the field state that slow learners are essentially normal in their emotional, social, physical, and motor development, others point out many differences. Slow learners are often characterized by:

- Short attention and interest span
- Limited imagination, creative thinking
- Slow reaction time
- Apathy, diffidence, dependence, placidity -- but frequent presence of excitability, sensitivity
- Academic retardation, especially in reading; achievement age lagging behind chronological age
- Absence or easy loss of self-confidence
- Gullibility, instability, shyness, submissiveness
- Low power of retention, memory
- Inability to do abstract thinking, to handle symbols, to evaluate results, to foresee consequences of acts
- Failure to transfer ideas, to extend beyond local point of view in time or place, to retain interest if results are deferred or intangible
- Limited powers of self-direction, of adapting to change in situations and people
- Low levels of initiative, vocabulary, standards of workmanship, persistance, concentration, reasoning, defining, discriminating, analyzing
- Ease of confusion; fears, anxieties
- Laziness -- but perhaps due to ill health or emotional maladjustment rather than as a constitutional factor
- Action based on impulse, insistence on quick results, inclination toward jumping to conclusions
- Poorer physical development -- height, weight, proportion, general health, unexplained fatigue

Development in early childhood often shows delay in sitting up, walking, and talking, but some who are average or even bright are also late in these abilities. A list of typical behavior patterns is sometimes of value to parents for comparison purposes, if used objectively and selectively. Help is sometimes needed from those who can be more objective than parents usually are.

Teachers may also be misled into believing a child is brighter than he really is by special gifts or talents, attractive personalities, or reasonably high achievement in one or more academic areas or leadership in athletic or other activities. Nor can the teacher assume that a child is a slow learner because he: asks irrelevant questions; demands attention; withdraws from academic work; withdraws from social situations into either shy or aggressive reactions; cheats, argues, or creates other disciplinary situations.

Identification Techniques

Three factors are of special importance in considering how to identify slow learners: the identification process should begin early, no single index or device is sufficient, and the process of identification should continue over a relatively long period of time.

Among the kinds of information needed are the following: physical, emotional, and mental development, defects, and/or deviations from the normal; abilities, interests, achievement; family and community background; school data. Included in these areas of information should be specific details related to speech development, vocabulary growth, and personality factors.

The most widely used identification techniques and materials are these:[3]

- Individual and group intelligence tests
- Personality tests
- Sociometric techniques, to measure relationships among specific children in groups
- Achievement tests, to measure subject matter accomplishment
- Physical examinations, to study growth, discern defects
- Home and community information, based on forms filled out by parents, school social worker, other professional personnel; use of home interviews, family history forms
- Anecdotal records, objectively selected and prepared, based on teacher comments regarding the child
- Teacher judgments regarding achievement and personality
- Child interviews; other information from guidance counselors
- School history form which may include achievement test scores, grades, and other information listed above
- Teacher-prepared materials; tests and games related to information and memory

A number of specific suggestions related to the many identification procedures can be made: Use the mental age rather than the intelligence quotient so that the level at which the child can work may be more definitely determined. Discern whether his being overage in grade is because of non-promotion or because of a late start in school. Study the physical, intelligence, and scholastic record for stability and consistency. Study the specific parts of tests rather than only consolidated test scores. Evaluate relationships between achievement and intelligence. Note and interpret the effects of home and family information, such as mobility, divorce, death, and sickness. Realize that achievement as an identification factor is inconclusive because the hard-working slow child may perform more adequately than the careless brighter one.

A rather inclusive list of informational sources has been suggested here, even though practical limitations in many school settings may necessitate restriction of techniques and materials.

Basic Needs of Slow Learners

Like all children, slow learners need a balance between success and failure, physical well-being, recognition of abilities and problems, measurement of progress in terms of capacity, and the help that all children need in establishing worthwhile, realistic goals. They, too, need the 3 A's of affection, acceptance, and achievement. As with other children, their needs and the ways to satisfy them must be individualized as much as possible.

Although their needs may be similar, differences in degree and emphasis exist. Academic work, but more concrete, realistic, meaningful; planning, but shorter range; relating words, ideas, learnings, but on simpler, more repetitive level; help and stimulation, but more frequently provided; activities, but of a more nonverbal nature -- these are the kinds of differences based on needs of slow learners.

All children face problems, but because slow learners are less able to solve them the obstacles take on greater proportions. It is necessary for parents and teachers to recognize that what may be an easily solved task for an average child may bring out difficult-to-live-with behavior from the slow learner merely because we fail to anticipate the pending frustration.

Basic Goals for Slow Learners

Goals for all children, in school and beyond should include:

- Good health, mental and physical
- Mastery of knowledge and critical thinking up to capacity
- Vocational preparation and adjustment
- Skill in human relationships -- family, society
- Personal development, based on abilities, aptitudes, and interests

For slow learners, adaptations must be made in these objectives, for the goals of learning must be obvious and reasonably immediate for them. A realistic approach to these children recognizes that:

- They cannot achieve so many and so varied adjustments as normal children.
- They cannot contribute to or participate in life so fully as normal children.
- They can achieve adjustment within their reach.
- They can contribute their share to accomplishing the tasks of life.
- They can enjoy life at their own level of interest and accomplishment.
- They cannot be expected to understand the complexities of the social order, or to contribute greatly to the solution of its problems.
- They will be followers.
- Their mental development will be slow.
- Average standards will more easily be attained in physical and social than in mental development.
- Home environments often provide inadequate opportunities for experience.
- Adjustments must ultimately be made chiefly in the ranks of semiskilled and unskilled occupations.[4]

There is a basic and close relationship between their goals and their needs, and it is vital that they participate in the establishment of the former and an understanding of the latter.

The Parents

The first, most concerned, and most important teacher is the parent, the adult most involved in the development and education of the slow learner. Psychologists stress the importance of parents when they write of the influences of early environment and the negative effects of parental disharmony, neglect, or rejection.

Whether one talks of the slow learner whose limitations are uncorrectable or the one whose mental processes can be elevated considerably when the causes which shackle them are identified and eliminated, the attitudes of parents have a strong influence on the education and development of the child. The feelings and relationships may be complicated by the concept the parent has of himself as well as with his inability to evaluate the child's potential objectively.

A child whose progress is slow may be seen as a threat or insult, or his slowness may be denied or ignored. Other reactions may be those of open hostility or of rejection disguised as oversolicitude. The actions of the parents, or the feelings, words, or ideas never completely submerged or hidden from a child made sensitive to them, will affect the home relationships and the school work of that child. Excessive daydreaming, withdrawal, temper tantrums, or other examples of antisocial behavior may evolve.

Resentment and misunderstanding should be eliminated in most of our relationships with children, but they are sometimes especially persistent in clinging to the parents of children most in need of acceptance and full understanding. The educational cliche of "taking the child where he is" applies with great force to the parent of a slow learner. To see abilities and limitations as they are, to accept characteristics that are not always lovable, to respect achievement which is even less than mediocre by artificial standards but high for this child, to dislike what is done but never to reject the child -- these are tests for parents of slow learners to pass, tests that try their patience, character, and love. But the importance of passing them is great, for children are seldom deceived about our basic attitudes toward them.

Parents who recognize that these children have the same basic needs as other children know that satisfaction in accomplishment is a relative thing. A bright child harnesses a tricky gas in a laboratory experiment, and we are proud of him. But pride can also come in a slow learner's reading skill when our expectations are very low.

Brighter brothers and sisters, high (and unrealistic) vocational aspirations, and competitive grading systems all constitute threats to the child's adjustments and the parents' acceptance of him. The "boys will be boys" escapades of normal adolescents are far less of a strain on family cohesion than is the slowly emerging truth that the cherished first born not only won't become a doctor but may not even finish high school. Although expectations may be low or limited, they can be honest and based on the pride which all children need for self-respect.

Protection from the "harsh world" may be another parental error. It may show itself in unwarranted praise, too much help, too much watching and concern. It is difficult sometimes to realize that a child who thinks slowly can think, and one whose sensitivity arouses slowly can have it aroused.

Problems of this kind are a family responsibility. Teachers can help, and administrators, guidance personnel, and others can also provide some understanding, but the basic concern remains where it starts. The first answers to questions, the first adjustment of toys and books to abilities, and the first acceptance of limitations are given at home where the pace is set for what the school will do later.

The School

Although some of the problems of slow learners reach a climax in intensity within the home, a whole series of long-range climaxes emerge after school entry. For the first time strangers become directly involved in learning and adjustment problems. Thousands of schools and teachers daily exert intensive efforts to ease these difficulties, many of which have been accumulating since birth.

In many school districts administrative provisions related to promotion, grading, special classes, partial separation, grouping, teacher aptitudes, and the use of ungraded or unlabelled class levels are under almost constant discussion and evaluation. Inevitably involved is the cost factor related to these matters. Concern is also expressed through conferences, reports, and more informal approaches to a long list of additional school adaptations to meet the needs of the slow learner. They include the following:

- Suitable reading, reference, audio-visual and other commercial and teacher-made materials.
- Teacher in-service preparation related to child study techniques and to adapted methods for teaching slow learners.
- A cumulative record system to which all teaching, guidance, and administrative personnel contribute, and which all use profitably to help advance the education of slow children.
- Teacher-counselor conferences, teacher visitation to other teachers and schools where programs are adapted with some success to meet individual needs, articulation between the elementary and secondary levels so educational continuity is eased for slow learners.
- A curriculum framework that provides for flexibility in organizing appropriate blocks of work for individual and small groups of children.
- The special needs of schools in rural areas, in poor neighborhoods, and in overcrowded districts.

A key factor in the school's approach to its slow learners is based on the attitudes, understandings, and knowledge of its staff. Do its members know how many slow learners they have? Are they aware of the causes and characteristics of slow learners? Do they recognize -- and fully accept -- their responsibilities related to identification, instruction, and evaluation of children and programs? Have they established close and cooperative relationships with parents? Have they made, and are they continuing to make, efforts toward accomplishing the objectives listed above, and others related to them? Do they realize that academic learning is only part of life for all children, and may be an especially limited segment for some of these children? Do they know how they contribute to (and how they might avoid) intellectual snobbery among children which sometimes evolves from concentration on unrealistic academic achievement, report cards, and retention in the grades?

Schools are usually aware of their problems, of the insecure and the isolates, of the ways in which self-respect is limited or destroyed, and of unfair competition between unequals. Their efforts are becoming more intensified every year toward solving them.

Current Practices

Schools generally attempt to adapt their educational programs to the needs of slow learners (as well as to all other children) within their limitations of qualified personnel, awareness of the problems, and money available. They have been helped by the alertness of textbook publishers, pressure of parents, and the needs of a country more aware than ever that each individual must be educated to his capacity in order to make a maximum contribution for the common good.

A vast array of practices has been developed, based on their appropriateness for particular schools, communities, and children. Thoughtful administrators and teachers study those in operation elsewhere, but are careful in their borrowing and adaptations. Samples of practices most frequently discussed in the literature on this subject are:

- Grouping on basis of achievement, using flexibility; not same group for all subjects and activities.
- Strengthened, and sometimes lengthened, readiness programs.
- Promotion with chronological age groups, based to a large extent on extensive research related to retention and its ineffectiveness toward increasing academic achievement.
- Simplification of materials, techniques, and experiences for slow-learning children; adaptive measures related to drill, review, concrete usage rather than abstract rules; use of high interest -- low ability reading materials.
- Efforts to cover different subject matter and in a different way, rather than exactly the same areas more slowly.
- Program adaptations in both teaching and guidance based on junior or senior high school as terminal education.
- Use of homerooms, or self-contained classrooms, for increased stability and continuity.
- Participation in schoolwide activities.
- Expansion of guidance and counseling facilities and activities.
- Inclusion of the child in the planning, through such practices as teacher-pupil conferences, or daily "contractual" arrangements.

If it is true that pupils with IQ's below 90 are practically certain to fail in such subjects as algebra and Latin and that many of those who test much below average mentally will fail in some of their studies during their first year in high school, then the special consideration being given to slow learners on the high school level in recent years is worthy of attention. Children forced to attend school by home and social pressures warrant programs that are within their intellectual grasp. The resultant adjustments in many communities are toward prevocational and technical high schools, and in others toward a modification of academic content and standards. Slow learners need a different kind and level of education than those who will go through college.

When queried on the subject, high school principals have generally felt that adaptations should be along these lines: Less class work and less difficult work; individual coaching or remedial work in special subjects; a special curriculum, including some academic work, but with emphasis on the practical and vocational. High schools have become more aware of individual differences and have been increasing their provisions for slow learners. Junior high schools are making more program adaptations than either senior or four-year high schools.

Promotion and Grading Policies

As indicated earlier, the trend to promote children with their chronological age group seems apparent. Nonpromotion as either a threat or a practice has contributed little, if at all, to academic gain generally, although in some individual cases it may be the correct solution for a problem.

Whenever possible, schools seem to aim at a goal that is simple to express, but difficult to implement: the best setting, the best group, the best teacher for each child. Although regrouping is necessary from time to time, reasonable stability and permanence are important ingredients in the progress of slow learners.

Despite specific subject matter handicaps, the current tendency is to move 14-year-olds on to high school because of the age and size factors. Where the high school has not adapted its program to meet needs of slow learners, retention may be a better solution.

Some schools solve the promotion problem by seeking answers to these questions: "Does he accomplish one year's growth in a year on the basis of achievement testing? After all, he starts lower, so we expect that he will end lower." "What will help this particular child more -- promotion or retention?" "Are our standards applicable to him?" The soundest approach seems to be to view it from the child's position, and seek a solution that will contribute most to his well-being now and in the future.

Another controversial area is grading. Should he be graded on the basis of his own ability, receiving a top grade if he is working to his capacity, or should firm standards be maintained for grading purposes? Some schools support one of those two view-points without qualification. Others use more flexible approaches based on transcript and cumulative folder information which reflect the child and his specific accomplishments and limitations in a more personalized manner.

The Curriculum

A one-sided approach to curriculum from the point of view of content is too limiting for any child. Concentration on reading, science, mathematics, art, music - or vocational subjects - to the almost complete exclusion of other areas would contribute to the preparation of a person ill-equipped to cope with the complexities of modern life. The ability to communicate with others through what is read, spoken, or heard, appreciation for the democratic way of life in order to be useful members of society, an understanding of the world of plants, animals, sky, and sea, preparation for making a living -- all of these and many more, adapted to individual capabilities, are necessary toward creating the well-rounded person.

A curriculum based on breadth, with depth appropriately adjusted, is the goal for schools attempting to educate slow learners well. One source views this objective as a five-pronged effort:[5]

1. Developmental approach -- based on experiences for effective living and for future needs, on the realization that the length of education may be limited and some areas should be considered earlier (consumer education, for example), on the belief that complex subjects of questionable value be omitted.

2. Modification approach -- based on a change in amount of content.

3. Simplification approach -- based on an adjustment downward in levels of difficulty.

4. Basic essentials approach -- based on the inclusion of minimum essentials at an understandable level.

5. Individualized approach -- based on an adaptation to purpose, personality, capacity, and rate of learning.

Organizational plans absorbing those approaches may be set up in a variety of ways. The child may be with the same teacher all the time, for part of the day in a core program (bringing together areas such as English and social studies or science and mathematics) or for only one subject. Most plans are based on slow learners being with other children in classroom settings for at least part of each day.

Teaching Techniques

Many suggestions have been made by writers in this field regarding specific techniques for teachers of slow learners, such as:

- Simplify activities because these children cannot see as far ahead as others; shorten in length and narrow in scope.
- Set up plans that are clear, definite, precise.
- Make relationships obvious.
- Use demonstrations generously, making them concrete and tangible rather than verbal and abstract; include illustrations, audio-visual aids, field trips, direct experiences.
- Use drill and practice, but not meaningless rote or repetition; quantity without quality is futile.
- Evaluate frequently, reassure often to help compensate for past frustrations, but give praise only if earned.
- Develop "pride in outfit," in accomplishment, in appearance.
- Stress the practical and the immediately meaningful, current happenings at home, in school, in the community, and in world affairs.

- Capitalize on individual abilities of an athletic, mechanical, social, artistic, or other kind; encourage creative ideas and interests or hobbies.
- Refrain from undue pressures.
- Use procedures that encourage student expression, including teacher-pupil planning and group processes in classroom activities.
- Seek, and bring out, vocational ambitions that are realistically founded.

It is probably obvious that many of these suggestions are as appropriate for average and bright children as they are for slow learners. But teaching techniques, as well as educational content, as they apply to the learning of slower students need special attention.

The Cost Factor

Although it may be relatively simple to add up the expenses involved in special materials, equipment, guidance and teaching personnel, and administrative time, the problem becomes far more complex when one attempts to estimate the cost of not educating the slow learner. The cost to him, to his family, and to the society deprived of his maximal services can be less accurately measured but may be far greater if all elements of that loss could be totaled. Ingredients of it are evasive factors like voters without well-developed powers of reasoning, workers laboring below potential capability levels, consumers excessively gullible to catch words and phrases, and tax payers contributing far less than they would if their education had been more appropriately adapted to them.

Educating slow learners may take time and energy that some feel might be used more profitably with other pupils. The use of public funds for them may be criticized. However, if the American ideal of education for "all the children of all the people" is to be more than empty words, the school must meet the needs of the slow learners as effectively as the needs of the more rapid learners.

The Teacher

In spite of the difficulties involved there has been agreement on some of the qualities that most teachers of slow learning children should possess. Many of their characteristics obviously overlap with those that all good teachers should have.

They need knowledge of subject matter areas, techniques of teaching the slow learner, stable physical and mental health, maturity, patience, and enthusiasm for working with these children. It is also necessary that they understand the concepts and techniques of child study and how to interpret them. They need average or better than average intelligence. They must be able to adjust their expections for children. The teacher should be able to regard the assignment of slow learners to his class not as professional disciplining or discrimination against him, nor an unpleasant and inescapable duty, but rather as a chance to tackle a tough job with great built-in satisfactions.

Accepting the child and being able to give him approval, submerging or eliminating one's prejudices, and helping create an atmosphere where his peers accept him -- these are among the basic tasks of the teacher. The teacher has a chance to help alter the negative feelings already created in the child because of an accumulation of earlier unfortunate experiences, and to help him accept his limitations as well as to develop his abilities. He can also assist the family toward a realistic understanding of the child and the problem.

The Community

Brief, though vital, consideration must be given to the place of the broader community in the education of the slow learner. Although the primary responsibility for health, education, and all other major factors related to the development of children are retained by the family and home, society has accepted the responsibility for supplementing that key source. It pays the educational bills, designates who shall teach, and decides how long the educational process will continue.

Slow learners do not, of course, all come from poor neighborhoods, but enough of them do for special attention to be paid to neighborhood poverty, overcrowdedness, and lack of education and play facilities as contributing factors to the incidence of lagging school accomplishment. Responsibilities accrue to the community, either narrowly or broadly defined, to recognize its deficiencies and explore ways of solving them, to know what its schools are like (in comparison with others), to realize how much it is contributing to the slow learning of those who are not inherently slower mentally and to the depressed learning of the group that is inherently slower.

It is important to develop a closer working relationship between the school and the community. Communities react when they are informed, when they understand facts of educational loss, and when they realize how they may be failing in their responsibility for local solution of major problems.

The Future

Because we know so much about slow learners, the causes of their learning handicaps, and ways to teach them, many guide-lines already exist in connection with improved educational programs for them. Equality of mankind does not imply equality of ability or of the programs themselves. To assume so violates individuality. No child should face the humiliation and despair of continued failure at prescribed tasks unsuited to his needs or abilities.

In addition to the practices in selected ongoing programs, numerous suggestions have been made for improving the educational accomplishments of slow learners. Some of these, too, are now being used, but their use probably will be more extensively attempted in the future. Among those most often mentioned are the following:

- Use of the team approach, and the involvement of as many specialists and others as necessary in diagnostic and teaching activities; included are the parents, teachers, school administrators, guidance personnel, and other specialized school personnel.
- Cooperative research efforts in schools and communities, involving state departments of education and university personnel. Other research needs are in areas like these: Parent and teacher attitudes toward slow learners; the contribution of vocational guidance and importance

of job placement; teacher preparation; relationships among groups of children -- slow learners, average, and above average; effects of class size on learning of slower students; public relations approaches to the problem; obstacles that block educational attainment.

- Discovery of slow learning potential at early ages and the place of nursery schools and kindergartens in the educational framework.
- Greater efforts toward individualized study of causes, needs, and suitable educational programs; adaptation of teaching materials and techniques, use of guidance personnel, realization that there is no single "best program" for slow learners.
- The advisability of separating these children from regular classes for part of each day or week, or of a limited period of full separation during the first year or two of school to help increase readiness for various processes. However, a stronger trend seems to be toward little or no educational separation of these children from other students.
- Counseling and education of parents of slow learners.
- Increased realization of community responsibilities.
- Greater use of multiple methods of identification; increased thoroughness of medical and psychological study.
- Postponement of formal approaches to subject matter until readiness patterns are successfully developed.
- Supplementing the regular classroom teacher with another teacher who has special preparation in remedial work, on itinerant or part-time basis.
- Realization that the educational process is more than scholastic instruction.
- Understanding that an improved school program for any group improves the program for all.

What we accomplish in the future for these particular children depends on how much we know about them and their needs, and how conscientious we are in adapting what others have already tried with success.

The comments of one writer in the field summarize our responsibility, as well as our opportunity:

> In school, at home, no matter where, one must never forget that the slow learner is no less a 'person,' no less an individual, than any other human being. His talents may be few, his promise slight, but he is none the less a member of mankind, cast in the same mold and made of the same clay. He claims equal rights with others in the regard of his fellow men, and to guidance and instruction designed to stimulate his growth to the fullest stature his powers permit. He too must be helped to stand on his own feet and face the world, self-reliant and unafraid. "With malice towards none, with charity for all" must be the teacher's watchword. Any other point of view denies the faith that has made America great.[6]

FOOTNOTES

1. Bloom, Irving and Murray, Walter I., "Some Basic Issues in Teaching Slow Learners," *Understanding the Child*, XXVI, No. 3 (June 1957), p. 85.

2. Among the most complete is a study conducted by Arizona State University, Tempe, Ariz., under a contract with the United States Office of Education, entitled, "Investigation of Mental Retardation and 'Pseudo-Mental Retardation in Relation to Bilingual and Sub-cultural Factors.'"

3. Various child study forms or adaptations of them provide for the accumulation of this kind of information. Example - Abraham, *A New Look at Reading*, Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956, pp. 95-116; four forms: parents, health, school, child.

4. Ingram, Christine P., *Education of the Slow-Learning Child*, New York: Ronald Press, 1953, p. 61.

5. Bloom and Murray, op. cit.

6. Featherstone, W. B., *Teaching the Slow-Learner*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941, Postscript.

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"SOLVING THE DILEMMA OF THE UNDERACHIEVER"

Permission Granted from Today's Health, American Medical
Association, Willard Abraham, Today's Health,
December 1965, pp. 35-37, 84-86.

SOLVING THE DILEMMA OF THE UNDERACHIEVER

"I tell you he's lazy! Not stupid - just plain lazy, that's all."

"Don't be ridiculous! You saw his report card last month and the month before that. All A's and B's. What's so bad about that?"

"Plenty. He didn't deserve one of those grades. They were gifts from teachers he's fooled."

"Oh, that's not true! How about his examination papers? Nothing below 85 or 90. Tommy's doing fine, just fine."

"But we're expecting too little from him - and he's perfectly satisfied to do as little as possible."

"He's a happy boy though, and if you put on too much pressure we'll do more harm than good."

"Tommy will be happier if he realizes how much more he can accomplish. Remember when he was in Little League? You thought he really wasn't a good catcher or hitter. But I practiced with him, he really worked at it - he became one of the best on the team."

"An what about those piano lessons that seemed such a waste of money at first? When we demanded more, encouraged more, and expected more, he came through. Now he not only plays well, but enjoys it as he never did before."

"Let's just leave well enough alone. He's doing all right. There's no sense in asking for trouble."

Has a discussion like this ever taken place between you and your husband or wife? It has with thousands of concerned parents, the pattern often the same as in Tommy's family. As often happens, the truth - and, therefore, the solution to the problems of a boy like Tommy - lies somewhere in between these two extremes and uncompromising points of view. There is some validity to the arguments of both parents in this illustration. For example, the husband is correct in his contention that grades sometimes do not give a clear picture of whether a child is working up to his capacity. Neither an "A" nor a "C" may accurately reflect what a child is really learning. At the same time, the wife is correct when she contends that undue pressure to "make" a child work to his capacity may be dangerous. Pressures which create tensions can, of course, result in less rather than more learning.

On the other hand, what the mother in this instance doesn't realize is that the careless, sometimes even slovenly, habits of childhood might lead to adult unhappiness and unfulfillment.

Parents are often limited in their objectivity not seeing their own child in clear perspective. They might have a faulty picture of what his capacity is. That is why the experienced teacher who views a child as one of 35 to 40 - and in the context of many years of experience - is a valuable and objective professional source of help.

You've known boys and girls like Tommy. Maybe you have one in your family. His record may look something like this: His report cards are satisfactory or better, perhaps even something like a B-plus average, and his examination and infrequent homework papers have complimentary comments and few red marks on them. His teachers like him. Still, his school counselor - if he has one - told you that "He's just not stimulated enough. But he seems to get along all right."

Finally, if he daily puts in a half hour of uninterrupted study time, that's a lot. (Before their discussion had ended, Tommy's father tossed in this bit of information: "He hasn't studied more than 15 minutes any night in the past month. How do I know? I timed him! And what makes me sad is that even with that inexcusable laziness, he seems to do satisfactory work in school. Just think, what if he really were a conscientious student..."

Concerning the last point, it should be noted that parental example may be largely at fault. For all the while parents may be pressuring their youngsters to work industriously they may be demonstrating a lack of initiative and stick-to-itiveness toward their own affairs. Parents can't expect youngsters to work harder and longer while at the same time they cut back on the time and effort they apply to their own work. Conflicts of all kinds can arise when we have two opposing sets of working standards in the same home and family.

Tommy's problem - the youngster who is performing below his capacity - is one of the most unrecognized difficulties in our homes and schools today. He is the child who is 10 years old, in fifth grade, and doing his work "adequately" - or 14 in ninth grade and "satisfying the teachers" - or seven in second grade and doing "what is expected of him."

What is wrong with that? A great deal if we really want our children to use their minds and energies to the extent to which they are capable; if we want them to have a self-image with which they themselves are pleased.

To put it more concretely, there is plenty wrong even if we want our children to finish school. For this is the kind of stuff of which school dropouts are made.

Much can be done by parents to prevent this from happening. Ask yourself these five questions about your own Tommy:

1. Has any teacher of his for whom you have respect ever suggested that maybe he is not working up to his capacity?
2. Do you think he might be able to learn more than he is now learning?
3. Is he able to learn more quickly?
4. Do you feel he should retain more of what he has learned?
5. Do the schools' standardized tests indicate that his performance is below his capabilities?

A single "Yes" answer should flash a warning sign to you. Your child may be a "pseudo slow learner." He is different from the true slow learner whose mental capacity is 75 to 90 percent of the "average" child's. That youngster will remain at his limited level throughout adult life, with his job performance and earning capacity below the norm.

Tommy and others like him are underachievers. They perform below what can and should be expected of them, a danger that can lead to later frustration if not noted and corrected in early years. Repetition and lack of challenge dog their daily tracks. Much as it is in divorce, the negative factors pile up slowly, steadily, methodically until they have "had it" at, say, age 16. Then to the surprise of everyone, they chuck the whole bit and school is the first thing to go.

Actually, parents of the Tommys of the world have a choice. Either they can let their youngsters lag behind in the hope that it will do them no harm or parents can choose to find out if, indeed, their student performs below his capacity. Then they look into the reasons and finally, do something about it.

Many parents have taken the first course and have lost in the gamble. They have lived to regret the fact that they didn't provide the early incentive and encouragement toward excellence in their children's performance during the years when they had the opportunity. They have seen their children drop out of school, fail in college, or move from job to job to job.

A boy with a fine, logical mind who could have brought luster to the legal profession lethargically settled into a routine clerical job because his parents were satisfied with his average work in school.

A girl unhappily compromised her talent for teaching because her parents felt that her high-school diploma, earned comfortably and easily, indicated that she had gone "far enough" in school.

Another youngster was pleased at accomplishing his goal of never taking a school book home at night, never preparing for an examination, and still "making it" through school.

Your child of average intelligence or above may be a member of this "pseudo-slow-learner" group for many reasons. While there is time you might follow the bit of advice given by a teacher a few years ago: "If you want Gulliver to rise, look at the ropes which bind him." With little effort you might start by untying the first knot while there's still time.

Identifying even one knot could lead to an obvious solution. Here are a few that may be worth checking as a beginning:

Physical Reasons

Sight--Does he squint, strain, rub his eyes or complain that they hurt, water, or itch? Does he hold his book very close to his face when he reads? Has it been a long time since his last eye test?

Hearing--Does he often ask you to repeat a question or statement? That may have nothing to do with hearing, of course. Many of our children know we will say something a second, third, or fourth time! We often encourage the habit of not listening! Does he sometimes miss - or seem to miss - a point made in a movie or on television?

Others--Has he had an infection, disease, or accident whose effects may be lingering on? Is there a possibility (as far-fetched as it may seem to you at first) that malnutrition may be holding him back, limiting his enthusiasms, interests, and capabilities?

Is it time for a thorough physical examination to help discern why he is not performing beyond the "adequate" plateau he now occupies?

Emotional Reasons

Family problems--Could it be that squabbles, nagging, or bickering between parents are upsetting him more than you may be aware?

Is divorce or separation a possible limiting factor on his working to capacity? In other words, is your failure now leading to his?

Is it possible that the relationships with his brothers or sisters are more disruptive than you had assumed?

Has the family moved around so much that deep inside he harbors the feeling that nowhere is home?

Does your satisfaction with his limited output provide all the justification he needs for not exerting himself and for developing that habit of doing "just enough to get by?"

School Problems

Is the teacher who is satisfied with "adequacy" rather than "capacity" destroying his incentive to work up to the latter?

When it comes to new educational materials and techniques, is the school's lethargy a sufficient excuse for his lethargy in school performance, permitting a creative spirit to wither before it has a chance to mature?

One affirmative reply and you can be off and running toward at least a partial solution to his problem.

Many other reasons may undergird your child's holding back on his ability to perform - shyness that makes him fearful. Physical or emotional immaturity can make him incapable. Educational pressures at school or unrealistic expectations at home can make him rebellious, even though in a quiet, submerged way.

Or it may be a hidden distaste for school imposed by insensitive teachers or demanding parents, laborious and discouraging study habits, failure to read assignments in what to him is a reasonable period of time, irregular attendance due to illness that results in a burdensome academic load, or a curriculum that fails to challenge his fertile, searching, pushing desire to learn.

Despite all - or any - of these, his work may satisfy his teachers and you. But because of them his future performance may be threatened.

To motivate your child who is performing more slowly than he is capable of requires a cooperative effort between you and his school. Neither can do the job alone.

Additionally, the youngster himself can help. From him will come the most insightful view of his own limited performance. He may quickly put his finger on the cause, the damper that has held him back. It will be to your credit if he confides in you that it's your pressure, lack of interest, or partiality to a sibling. What he identifies might not be the real reason, but it may be enough to warrant your careful thought just the same.

Together you can seek answers to questions that may help move your child toward the achievement his abilities deserve:

1. Can "inspiration" turn the tide?

   Don't discount it too quickly as a naive idea, but the one-to-one, adult-child relationship and expression of interest and concern may help loosen the lid on his performance. You may not be the proper adult for the job, however. Nor may it be a teacher or counselor. Sometimes a neighbor, aunt or uncle, cousin, or friend may provide the one bit of stimulation that is missing, the one link toward helping the child realize he is more important or more capable or smarter than he has demonstrated so far.

2. Is it possible to be realistic in starting with him where he is?

   This question is far from an educational cliché, for "where he is" is based on exactness related to the specific interests, fears, ambitions, and hopes he cherishes. A knowledge of his current absorption (whether it is Ian Fleming or one of the many successors to the Beatles, or both), his concern about proving his masculinity (whether through sports, sex, smoking, or liquor), his worry about the future (and whether a merely adequate school record will get him into the university he wants to attend) - these are the kinds of feelings and attitudes of which the sensitive parent must be aware if the breakthrough is to be made. It is like "leading from strength" in bridge - knowing where your child is before you can help him get to where he should be going.

3. Are there "earthy" kinds of motivation that can be used effectively?

   You may not like to resort to them, but the end may be worth the means. For example, how about the fact that the average university graduate has lifetime earnings far in excess of $100,000 more than the average high school graduate? To get the necessary university preparation one must have top grades plus a list of creditable scholastic and extracurricular activities.

A somewhat basic approach, which is getting less controversial all the time, is the system of "honors classes" which encourage students to move ahead at their own rate rather than be held back and discouraged by mediocrity.

4. Can you curb your desire to restrict, talk, direct - and listen for a change?

Your youngster's complaints may be well warranted. An airing of them could ease the pressures he feels and encourage action on his part to to break through the slowness harnessing him.

5. Are you stifling him by repeatedly calling his attention to the importance of the highest academic degree?

It may not be at all important to him, and he'll show you in his own way by "holding back" on his school performance. The aspect of engineering, business, art or music toward which he aims may not require the top degree, and it might even be a handicap. Talk it over with him, and with authorities in the specific field. You might find out that your boy is absolutely right after all.

6. Has it ever occurred to you that motivation to perform may be stimulated by deprivation?

Too many parents these days - and you may be among them - almost suffocate their children with an overburdened, cocoon-like environment where every whim is satisfied, perhaps even saturated. Slowing down the stream of supposed necessity and frequent luxury may be the healthiest step you can provide toward your child's taking a first look at a world that is not fully cushioned. And that one look may lead to activities that he previously hadn't been stimulated to perform.

7. Can you shake yourself loose from some psychological verbiage that has no relevance at all for you and your child?

"Overprotective," "dominant," "aggressive," "Oedipus complex" - the terms may be interesting, but they and their kind might be totally unrelated to your youngster and the chains that bind him. Too often words get in the way of action. And too seldom these days are we secure enough to unburden ourselves by insisting, "I'm this parent, not all parents. He is this boy, not all boys. The solution for this problem, and mine, is unique and personalized, and I won't find it in the generalized statements of textbooks and psychological treatises."

Your underachiever may seem to be satisfied, but how can he really be if he has any inkling that he can work at a higher level, that his professional goals could be raised and more assuredly reached? He may show no resentment toward school or family, but his dissatisfactions may be deeply ingrained toward them, and toward himself as well.

Perhaps his disappointment and discouragement lie far below the surface, but smoldering and ready to burst loose as it suddenly hits him that he has wasted himself. His resentment may not have far to look for a target when he recognizes you permitted that waste to take place.

Slowness may mean that your child is being methodical, thorough, and careful. But if you have any hint that he could perform more capably, your attention to the problem now might pay rich dividends in the not-so-distant future - in his meeting the increasing pressures and challenges of college, the working world, and life itself during an era far more demanding than the one in which you grew up.

With one-third of our teen-agers not finishing high school, with the prospect of seven and a half millions added to the list during this decade, with unemployment and job dissatisfaction hitting dropouts very hard, the late President John F. Kennedy's remarks in his January 14, 1963, State of the Union message are particularly pertinent: "The future of any country which is dependent on the will and wisdom of its citizens is damaged, and irreparably damaged, whenever any of its children is not educated to the fullest extent of his capacity, from grade school through graduate school."

During the past few years a whole new concept of the slow learner has emerged across the country. It is based on the child who works below his capacity because of correctable reasons beyond his and his family's control.

These, too, are "pseudo slow learners," the economically deprived and the children who are educationally handicapped because they speak a language other than English or represent a different culture.

Many are frustrated, belligerent, and antagonistic toward schools and teachers even before they enter first grade. They often lag behind educationally by the time they reach second grade, and they may never catch up. The school-books and other materials to which they are exposed are frequently prepared for other children, and are far removed from their family and community.

They and their families represent one-fifth of our population and permeate hundreds of urban and rural areas. The seriousness to all of us of their neglect is pointed out by John Bowlby who said, "Deprived children, whether in their own homes or out of them, are a source of social infection as real and serious as are carriers of diptheria and typhoid."

Underestimating their potentialities, ignoring their abilities, wasting their talents - these negative approaches are on the way out. The Office of Economic Opportunity has a chance to capitalize on the most productive, new educational approaches, such as programmed learning. Writers like Frank Riessman, Edgar May, and Michael Harrington have become our conscience as they remind us that children are children, whether they are ours or theirs.

Project Beacon at Yeshiva University (150 West 56th Street, New York, 10019) has a bi-monthly publication listing current developments and materials on the disadvantaged. Project Head Start, last summer, pulled together thousands of pre-school children and professional educators to help them get ready for a fruitful beginning to their school experience.

The scanty school records accumulated for many of these children may indicate they are "slow," but are they really? When they speak two or three languages by the time they are seven? When they occasionally pull themselves out of the doldrums of financial and health despair with all the odds against them?

On a national, regional, state and local basis the virus of this kind of pseudo slow learning is being attacked. The first major efforts have been made to eradicate its corroding effect on Spanish-American, Negro, Indian, and other children who often receive the poorest teaching, housing, eating, and clothing, and who face the least chance to finish school, get a job, and healthfully raise a family.

So the pseudo slow learner may be in your family muddling along as mediocrity, fooling himself, his teacher, and you into thinking he is performing to his capacity - or he may be in the large family crowded into one room near the center of town.

In either case, the waste is unnecessary and tragic. Your concern can be the wedge toward action. As Oscar Wilde said "Discontent is the first step in the progress of a man or of a nation." When we include the discontent we feel if our children lag behind their considerable capabilities, we might add "the progress of a parent" to the Irish author's list.

"THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILD"

Abraham, Willard, The Mentally Retarded Child and Educational Films, Coronet Films, Chicago, Illinois, pp. 5-18.

THE EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILD

A teacher's most challenging task is to educate to their capacities all children with whom he works, especially those who learn more slowly with more difficulty because of intellectual limitations.

Many statements appear in print about who these children are. Here is one of the clearest:

"The term mental retardation itself is often misunderstood...Simply stated, mental retardation is a condition resulting from a basic abnormality of the human mind. It refers to the lack of intellectual ability resulting from arrested mental development. It interferes with the ability to adjust to the demands of environment. It manifests itself in poor learning, inadequate social adjustment, and delayed achievement. Usually this condition is either present at birth or begins during childhood. The causes are many and obscure. Some have already been determined and are easy to highlight; others are beyond our present knowledge and would yield only to research.

"Mental retardation is not a disease. Rather, it is a sympton of a disease, of an injury, of some obscure failure of development, even of inadequate opportunity to learn. Just as a fever is a sympton of an infection, mental retardation is a sympton of mongolism, birth injury or infection, or even inadequate stimulation in early childhood. It can be so severe that the afflicted person never leaves protective care, or so mild that it is detected only under stress or through special tests."*

Characteristics of Educable Mentally Retarded Children

Long treatises can be, and have been, written describing these children. Pictures, personal contacts, watching and listening, noticing how they work and in what they are interested - these may tell the story more graphically.

Reactions of people vary a great deal, of course, ranging from the college students in teacher preparation who after their first contact commented in a kind of surprised way, "But they look so normal!" to the uninformed young mother who said, "They shouldn't be allowed in the schools!"

Beneath the surface of superficial observation and unsubstantiated conclusions, below the limited view of the mongoloid child that clearly indicates he does look different and the narrow insight that fails to understand the breadth of skills, concepts and understandings that can be learned...beyond all these is the child himself.

Despite the vast variations among educable mentally retarded children, a few characteristics emerge about which some general statements can be made. Learning more slowly and with less depth than other children; limited powers of self-direction; limited abilities to abstract, generalize, transfer, draw on past experiences to solve problems; need for the concrete and specific; tendency to become frustrated rather easily - are among the kinds of conclusions teachers come to on the basis of their work with these children. And then they will often hurry to add, "But not all of them! There's Johnny, for example, whose attention span and ability to concentrate are greater than those of many children I taught in a regular classroom. When he has the right thing to attend to and concentrate on, that is!"

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*From A National Plan to Combat Mental Retardation by President John F. Kennedy. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1962.

But we still can assume certain things about these children, including a memory span tending toward the brief side. development of study skills that require teacher patience and repetition, and longer periods of time to assimilate information. To try to squeeze all of these children into a "learning mold", has sometimes frozen the teaching methods used with them, methods which require flexibility and adaptability with all children and especially with the slower ones.

Numerous misconceptions about them still persist, even among some teachers who work with these children. Lack of understanding about their learning characteristics is joined by even broader problems. That many can prepare for and hold economically feasible jobs; that juvenile delinquency and mental retardation do not go hand in hand; that cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental illness, and brain injury are not necessarily related to mental retardation - these and many other factors with educational implications must be disseminated more widely. And then there is still the old idea - now, fortunately, less frequently encountered - that the child with an IQ of around 50 has fifty per cent of a normal potentiality and can reach the same intellectual goals as the so-called average child but it just takes twice as long!

Pseudo Mental Retardation

A distinction must be made between retardation due to inherent causes and the kind due to limitations of evaluation or environment, or resulting from differences in language, socio-economic level, or culture. A child's limited sight, hearing, or emotional adjustment may be other examples of a restricted learning situation. The results might be similar, a slower process of learning, but the reasons why may vary considerably.

During the past few years increased attention has been directed to the disadvantaged child who learns more slowly than he may be capable of learning. Now refined teaching and child study methods and materials (and the funds to develop and purchase them) can accelerate the solution to this problem.

Many are frustrated, belligerent, and antagonistic toward schools and teachers even before they enter first grade. They often lag behind educationally by the time they reach second grade, and there is a possibility they may never catch up. This used to be a "probability", but Project Head Start, Upward Bound, and related activities have started to turn the tide.

They and their families represent one-fifth of our population and permeate hundreds of urban and rural areas. The seriousness to all of us of their neglect was pointed out by John Bowlby who said, "Deprived children, whether in their own homes or out of them, are a source of social infection as real and serious as are carriers of diphtheria and typhoid."

Underestimating their potentialities, overlooking their abilities, wasting their talents - these negative factors are on their way out. Educational films, programmed instruction, and other efforts to motivate and teach individuals and small groups who in the past have been difficult to reach are beginning to pay rich dividends.

Writers like Frank Riessman, Michael Harrington, and Edgar May have become our conscience as they remind us that children are children whether they are ours or belong to someone else.

The scanty school records accumulated for many of these children may indicate they are "slow", but are they really? When they speak two or three languages by the time they are seven? When they pull themselves - sometimes with the help of a rare, insightful teacher - from a hole of financial and health deprivation despite all the odds seeming to be against them?

On a national, regional, state and local basis the virus of this kind of retardation is being attacked. The major efforts have been to eliminate its corroding effects on Spanish-American, Negro, Indian, and other children who often receive the poorest teaching, housing, food and clothing, and who face the least chance to finish school, get a job, and healthfully raise a family.

Needs of Educable Mentally Retarded Children

The more you read about the needs of the educable retarded, the more it may occur to you that they are similar in kind, but their needs vary in degree, from the needs of other children.

The three A's of Acceptance, Achievement and Aspiration step into the picture, the latter sometimes requiring a realistic trimming-down for over-aspiring parents. Phrases like the "self image", "self reliance", and "self confidence" keep coming up. Needs related to their education caused Christine Ingram to write that "the three elements of purpose, recurrence, and success are essential in effective learning for the mentally retarded."

For those children who come from homes where sanitation, hygiene and diet are given little thought or attention, such needs may also require school emphasis.

But when we become enmeshed in the educational verbiage of needs based on physiological, social and ego factors, it is enlightening to be brought back to earth by material like these excerpts from "The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy."* Its emphasis on the concrete rather than the abstract in educational materials and techniques for slower children, a point so often made by writers and research people in this field, is well presented.

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*Stephen M. Corey, "The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy," Childhood Education, January, 1944, pp. 219-220.

"No, I'm not very good in school...I don't know why the teachers don't like me. They never have very much. Seems like they don't think you know anything unless you can name the book it comes out of...

"In school, though, we've got to learn whatever is in the book and I just can't memorize the stuff. Last year I stayed after school every night for two weeks to learn the names of the Presidents. Of course I knew some of them, like Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln, but there must have been thirty altogether and I never did get them straight.

"I'm not too sorry though because the kids who learned the Presidents had to turn right around and learn all the Vice Presidents...our teacher this year isn't so interested in the names of the Presidents. She has us trying to learn the names of all the great American inventors.

"I guess I just can't remember names in history. Anyway, this year I've been trying to learn about trucks because my uncle owns three and he says I can drive one when I'm sixteen. I already know the horsepower and number of forward and backward speeds of twenty-six American trucks, some of them Diesels, and I can spot each make a long way off. It's funny how that Diesel works. I started to tell my teacher about it last Wednesday in science class when the pump we were using to make a vacuum in a bell jar got hot, but she said she didn't see what a Diesel engine had to do with out experiment on air pressure so I just kept still. The kids seemed interested though. I took four of them around to my uncle's garage after school and we saw the mechanic, Gus, tear a big truck Diesel down. Boy, does he know his stuff! ...

"Civics is hard for me, too. I've been staying after school trying to learn the 'Articles of Confederation' for almost a week because the teacher said we couldn't be good citizens unless we did. I really tried because I want to be a good citizen. I did hate to stay after school, though, because a bunch of us boys from the south end of town have been cleaning up the old lot across from Taylor's Machine Shop to make a playground out of it for the little kids from the Methodist home. I made the jungle gym from old pipe and the guys made me Grand Mogul to keep the playground going. We raised enough money collecting scrap this month to build a wire fence clear around the lot.

"Dad says I can quit school when I am fifteen, and I am sort of anxious to because there are a lot of things I want to learn how to do and as my uncle says, I'm not getting any younger."

So, perhaps their needs aren't so different from ours after all - success and recognition, appreciation, acceptance by others, and basic good health to enjoy all the rest.

How They Learn

"One of the most fundamental ways in which retarded children differ from normal children of the same age lies in the slowness and inefficiency with which they acquire knowledge and skills."*

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*Robinson, Halbert B., and Nancy M. Robinson, The Mentally Retarded Child, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965, p. 317.

Maybe you've heard teachers wonder aloud why their co-worker down the hall (hopefully down the hall, rather than relegated to a ramshackle portable or discarded tool room hidden behind the playing field and far removed from all the other classrooms) has only 10 or 15 children while she struggles along with 30 or 40. That "slowness and inefficiency" are among the reasons. And so are a lot of other factors related to how these children learn. Here are some of them:

1. Because they do not easily generalize from what they have learned, the teacher must help them transfer from what they already know to new learning, from the familiar of where they have been to the unfamiliar of new situations.

2. They learn best and remember longest from what has meaning for them. (And the question might readily be asked: "Who doesn't?")

3. Their attention span is related to the extent of comprehension and interest in what's happening to and in the world around then.

4. Mere words do not have the impact on them that a visual approach does. It is vital that their teachers understand that high-impact, multi-sensory materials often can cut through and stay with these children while abstractions might slide right by. In addition to the visual, a variety of other sense modalities may be useful, including vocal, kinesthetic, and auditory.

5. Reading is lower on the communication and learning hierarchy for them than are television, films and radio. It is as if the "typographical age" is being replaced by the "electronic age."

6. Motivation based on success and concrete activities and materials is important. That is why programmed instruction and educational films are helping to fill the materials vacuum for these children, as a specific supplement to external motivation of praise, "gold stars" and recognition that may be less meaningful.

7. Systematic, orderly instruction is a "must" because reliance on incidental learning - just as in regular classrooms - may result in little learning or none at all.

8. Their frequently inadequate speaking and listening abilities may mean they can learn best from situations and materials that provide opportunities for them to do both.

The "how" and "what" related to the learning of educable mentally retarded children were well summarized in a recent study of the Chicago Public Schools which said, "The materials and methods employed in instruction are necessarily concrete, functional, and highly repetitive in order to take into consideration the child's short memory and limited attention span."

Educational Objectives

A fascinating, and not-too-pleasant, record is available of community and family "goals" for mentally retarded children in years long past. Starvation and death from rocky heights were among them. The compassionate and far more practical objectives we now follow in order to develop adults who can become contributing members of a demanding society have evolved slowly and laboriously. Recent and enlightened Presidential statements and the writings of people like Pearl Buck, Dale Evans, and many others, didn't evolve full-blown out of the backwardness of past centuries.

The specific educational objectives for these children are closely related to the major statements of objectives for all children. One of the differences, however, is that the promises of the latter have often developed into the practices of Special Education. It is a giant step, representing many years of hard work, from the composite list below to the specific classroom practices that competent teachers of the retarded use every day:

- Physical and Mental Health
- Civic Responsibility
- Critical Thinking
- Economic, Consumer, and Vocational Efficiency
- Sound Human Relationships - Family and Community
- Appreciation of and Skill in School Subjects
- Foundation for Worthwhile Leisure-Time Activities
- Development of Individual Interest and Aptitudes

Other fine-sounding words are also sprinkled throughout the literature, easy to talk and write about, but requiring the most graphic demonstrations and visual aids to bring them to life for these youngsters - words like courtesy, dependability, cooperation, unselfishness, and honesty.

One writer restricts the prime educational consideration of the mentally retarded child to "making" him acceptable to others. Another pinpoints a functional vocabulary. But most teachers know that the major objectives are far more complex - and in greatest need of all are the human, sensory and other aids available. Although the starting point may be low verbal skills and limited experiences, the goal must be to expand their capabilities: socially, vocationally, physically and emotionally, through pictorial as well as other kinds of reinforcement. Instead of settling for the small pebble, alert teachers know that the objectives are in the ever-widening circles when the pebble has been tossed into the waters of a rich educational program seeking both academic achievements and personal strengths.

So-called average standards may be more nearly attained by these children in physical and social (rather than intellectual) developments, and hand skills may be more easily acquired than others - but they are not sound reasons for restricting program objectives. Excuses, perhaps, but not good reasons.

By using a three-fold approach - (1) knowledge of the children, their needs and how they learn, (2) the major educational goals we must always keep in mind, and (3) factors of curriculum and teaching methods - sound classroom programs can be planned. The first two we have discussed briefly. The third is next, before we move on to a technique and material that can help teachers follow the advice of Ralph Waldo Emerson, to "be the opener of doors to those who come after you."

Curriculum and Methods

From Descoeudres who borrowed Dewey's learn-by-doing, and also emphasized perceptual knowledge, grouping subjects around a central theme, and individualized instruction - to Ingram's strong advocacy of the unit approach - to Bruner's idea that "any subject can be taught effectively...to any child" (even though he didn't specifically refer to the mentally retarded) - from all these, ideas related to curriculum and methods for teaching the mentally retarded have evolved. They have also come from the practical ideas expressed by people like Samuel A. Kirk, Jerome H. Rothstein, Thomas E. Jordan, Joseph Lerner, H. Gene Hensley, and I. Ignacy Goldberg. And groups of teachers all over the country have written and mimeographed courses of study for their school systems, books that reflect classroom practices, materials and recommendations.

Telling others about the "what" and "how" of teaching is a pretty ticklish business, because to copy what others have done can be both foolish and dangerous. It depends first and foremost on the children, on their needs and capabilities. The teacher's background, preparation, interests and personality are also of prime importance. So are the ideas of parents and administrators, and that vague thing called "the community attitude" toward the retarded - and whether these children are in regular or special classes, for they are far from all being in special classroom settings.

Jordan referred to these three approaches, all of which he felt were inadequate:*

> The "Bucket" Model - pour information from teacher to learner.
>
> The "Garden" Model - because the classroom is like a garden, diligent cultivation will do the job.
>
> The "Love" Model - all that's needed is to lavish affection.

He then goes on to describe a model of the educative process that may have more promise. It is based on the learner as the unit of education, the inclusion of many elements in the learning process, and the need for behavioral changes.

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*Jordan, Thomas E., The Mentally Retarded, Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1961, p. 265.

Through her emphasis on the unit approach (subjects like seeds, food, clothing, music and poultry), Christine Ingram felt that first-hand experiences could bring real purpose into a child's work and play. A unit, she said, enables a child to plan, execute and judge in a simple way at his level of maturity. In her format the teacher occupies a key role, and "every special-class teacher should have... training in the operation of equipment and materials."*

Although the criteria for selecting curricular content should be (1) its contribution toward a happy childhood and (2) the probable need for it in adult life, the areas are not-so-surprisingly similar to academic content of other children. But here the adaptation to capabilities is even more essential. So are the needs for it to be well-planned, geared to the children's interests and experiences, somewhat familiar, and varied.

In these classrooms there are language arts (listening, speaking, reading when possible, and all the rest). There are numbers, science, health and safety, art and music, practical arts of homemaking and woodworking, social studies, and physical education. Each fundamental skill can be taught through many different and often repetitive experiences, through methods that change and materials that appeal to all the senses. Tool subjects and enrichment, social living and occupational skills, activities related to their daily lives and the world around them - all these are demanded of teachers whose children some people once thought could be taught by anyone!

But now we know differently. We are more aware than ever that intelligence, teaching skills, and sensitivity are essential, and at a level perhaps even higher than in the regular classroom. And the wonderful part is that we find them at work with these limited children sometimes even more often than in regular classrooms, often searching for and experimenting with new materials and techniques.

That's why we will now turn to a particular material and technique that hold much promise for these teachers and their children.

When it brings this kind of comment from a teacher of the educable mentally retarded, it deserves the serious look which we will give it:**

"We wouldn't plan our educational program without films. They vitally reinforce present and previous learning experiences - open doors to future learning.

"It's a thrill to see the beam of recognition, that 'A ha! moment' when a child relates to the film and sits with eyes 'glued' to the screen."

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*Ingram, Christine P., Education of the Slow-Learning Child. New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1953, pp. 198-199.

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"PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION"

Abraham, Willard, "Programmed Instruction: It's Time for a Serious Look", Arizona Teacher November 1966, pp. 6-7.

PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION

It's Time For A Serious Look

Perhaps it once took 15 years for three percent of the schools to latch on to a new idea (as Paul Mort of Teachers College, Columbia University, said), but that kind of lag is a thing of the past. Change and encouragement to experiment are here to stay, and relunctance to note their presence means we are closing our eyes to the educational facts of life all around us.

Those facts emerge clearly for all of us to see in developments like these:

- Time, Inc. and General Electric roar into the educational arena with their new enterprise, General Learning Corporation, dedicated to developing new educational materials and equipment. Joining the electronics industry's "hardware" and the publishers' "software" means the two "are interested in making money out of what is now the biggest business in the United States - education," says Saturday Review.
- Litton Industries, International Telephone and Telegraph, Philco, Avco and others enter the scene with the educational interests they demonstrate in Job Corps camps.
- Raytheon bought D.C. Heath, CBS - Creative Playthings; IBM - SRA; Xerox - Basic Systems - University Microfilms; the industrial-publishing combinations and their implications for education are huge.
- PL89-10 came last year and extends into this year and will continue for many years to come, with its encouragement to innovate and expand current school activities.

What all this means for classroom teachers and school administrators is that we can no longer be reluctant about acknowledging this era of change. We can no longer hide behind the textbook we've used for years, the technique we've perfected, and the schedule we've refined. We can no longer give only lip service to meeting the needs of individual children.

That does not mean that we toss everything aside right away and install a group of expensive computers in every classroom. (The July 23, 1966 issue of Saturday Review includes one of the best discussions of that subject yet available.) A sounder approach is to explore the possibilities that have been on the scene for a few years, weigh the advantages they provide, and give them a chance to help us do even better the teaching job which most teachers already do quite well. A professional entry to the future is to experiment with some proven methods and materials, rather than merely to continue talking about them.

A good example is the much misunderstood field of programmed learning - misinterpreted, neglected, still too often avoided, mainly because it has been viewed as a threat to some teachers. It more accurately can be described as "teacher's helper," available to help improve the learning process.

It submits these facts from its extensive research:

- There is sound evidence of its effectiveness, in contrast with the sketchy research in connection with many other teaching techniques and materials.
- It insures more learning, retained longer and gained in less time than the same kind of information obtained through conventional teaching techniques.
- The child can move ahead successfully at his own rate with an immediate check on his answers. He usually enjoys the process, and takes a step toward teaching himself, planting the seeds of independent study and scholarship, as well as responsible citizenship.
- It has a special contribution to make to the culturally and economically deprived, the children and young adults for whom education has in the past often meant frustration and disappointment. Through this technique it can finally mean success, stimulation, and a desire to learn.

Some school administrators and teachers have freely stated their objections to programmed learning - and at the same time exposed their fear of what they don't understand:

"It will replace the teacher." The displacement fear is an old tale. It was also shouted when educational films came in, and perhaps even appeared when the first textbook came on the scene!

"It dehumanizes learning." To which one might ask, "Which results in more conformity, mediocrity, and 'dehumanizing' - individualizing instruction through this technique, or teaching all children the same thing at the same time in groups or classes?"

"The programs are poor." Some of them no doubt are less effective than others, but so are some textbooks and teachers. Does that mean we dispose of all of them?

"It's a machine and there's no place in education for a mechanical approach." The unfortunate "teaching machine" term got us off to a false start, and now even though practically all programs are in self-contained booklets, the scare persists.

"They are too expensive." Reusable programs are plentifully available for slightly over $1.00 each.

"They are just another textbook or workbook." Try to find either a textbook or workbook that is self-teaching, logically organized and thoroughly tested prior to publication. When soundly prepared programs are released, their publishers know that they teach what they say they do. For what textbooks can that claim be made, and have it stick?

"You can't fight 'The Establishment'." It is ironic that the major decision-makers in our schools - administrators and school boards - provide much of the obstinacy when it comes to innovation. They have the authority, but not necessarily the imagination or creativity to move into new areas.

Two intensive publishers' surveys showed strong approval by school people who use programs, and negative skepticism by those who do not. They also showed widespread buck-passing within the schools, an intricate back-and-forth pattern involving teachers, boards, administrators, cirriculum people, audio-visual persons, and many, many committees seeking an evasive kind of consensus before trying a new idea. Another national study resulted in an overwhelming stamp of approval by both teachers and students who had had programmed learning experience.

A series of questions which any teacher can ask might consist of the following. They can help get the action too long delayed in some schools.

1. Are programmed learning materials available in our school? Are there lists of them available?
2. Are they used? With whom? How much?
3. What grade levels and subject areas are included?
4. Who prepared the programs?
5. How were they tested before publication?
6. How were they tested after publication?
7. What do the test results show about their ability to teach?
8. How much do the programs cost?
9. Are they reusable?
10. Do they fit into my teaching objectives?

Well-validated programs are increasingly being used for a variety of purposes - enrichment, remedial activities, "regular" classroom activities with hard-to-teach subjects. Examples of the latter include concepts related to dictionary usage, latitude and longitude, map-reading, the Bill of Rights, binary arithmetic, writing a research report, and many other topics that strain even some capable, conscientious teachers. The availability of these inexpensive aids - and their coverage by PL89-10 and NDEA funds - has encouraged school districts first to order them experimentally and now to adopt them as part of an on-going educational plan.

Programmed learning materials are just one example of our entry to tomorrow - and it's a non-threatening, easy, helpful entry.

One man, in looking ahead, said:

"It is an extraordinary era in which we live. It is altogether new. The world has seen nothing like it before. I will not pretend, no one can pretend, to discern the end; but everybody knows that the age is remarkable for scientific research into the heavens, the earth, what is beneath the earth; and perhaps more remarkable still is the application of this scientific research to the pursuit of life. The ancients saw nothing like it. The moderns have seen nothing like it until the present generation . . . The progress of the age has almost outstripped human belief."

It may be a consoling thought to realize that the newness and change we face today are not exactly a unique experience - for those words were used by Daniel Webster in 1847!

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